IRAN, WAR HAWKS & WIKILEAKS

THE Nation.

GREEN STRATEGY NOW

CHRISTIAN PARENTI

MAKING UNIONS MATTER AGAIN

JANE McALEVEY

PEDRO NOGUERA

REFRAMING THE SCHOOLS DEBATE

DANIEL ALTSCHULER

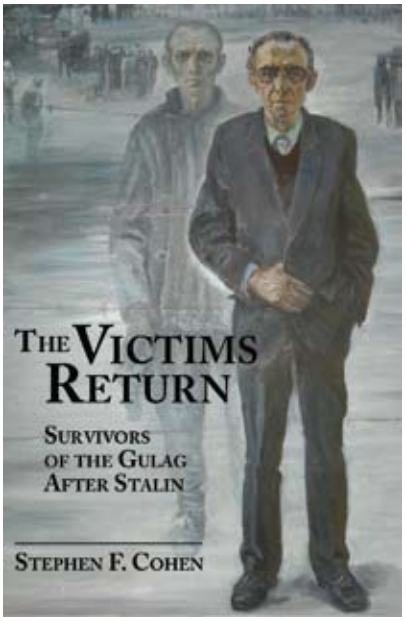
IMMIGRANT ACTIVISTS REGROUP

DECEMBER 20, 2010
TheNation.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Stephen Cohen brings to life the horror, shock, and despair of Stalin's gulags . . . from the viewpoint of victims' family members."

—*New York Journal of Books*



"A striking memoir . . . Russians today are inheritors of an unspeakably immense crime, and Cohen engages fully—and personally—with the debate."

—*The New Yorker*

"An authoritative, engrossing account."

—*E.L. Doctorow*

"Needed, well-written, and compact . . . Cohen helps us better understand Russia's enigmatic present, and better appreciate what to look for as it lurches into the future."

—*New York Times Book Review*

978-1-933002-40-8
Hardcover, 224pp., $22.95

Available At:
PublishingWorks.com, Amazon.com, & BarnesandNoble.com,
or call
603.778.9883 to order

Letters

Anglicans Against Apartheid

Princeton, N.J.

Katha Pollitt's "Postcards From Cape Town" ["Subject to Debate," Nov. 15] mentions apartheid-compliant Anglican clerics. Many Anglicans were out front in the civil organization against apartheid for decades. Father Trevor Huddleston, who came to work in Sophiatown in 1943 and was made president of the antiapartheid movement in 1981, is the most notable example of their active conscience, which leads directly to Bishop Desmond Tutu's high-profile presence.

D.E. Steward

Black Women Fight Back

Cummington, Mass.

Thanks to Melissa Harris-Perry for "To Whom Apologies Are Really Due," which places Virginia Thomas's request for an apology from Anita Hill into historical perspective ["Sister Citizen," Nov. 15]. The good news is that alongside the persistent vilification of black women Harris-Perry recounts, there is an equally long history of resistance. Hill stands in a continuous line of women who have fended off assaults and refuted the stereotype of immorality, from the slave known as Celia to Rosa Lee Ingram to Dessie Woods, to name a few. Until that strand of resistance is woven into our national narrative, conservatives will peddle myths and half-truths that serve their ends.

Just as Clarence Thomas resorted to a skewed account of lynching that overlooks sexual violence against black women, the antiabortion movement today spins a twisted tale that sidesteps black women's realities. The religious right is waging an "endangered species" campaign, alleging that a genocidal conspiracy proceeded inexorably from slavery to lynching to eugenics to legalized abortion. This warped argument portrays black women as dupes of white elites and profit-driven abortion providers rather than as moral agents who negotiate economic inequalities and discriminatory policies to make difficult reproductive decisions.

Black women are fighting back. When the "endangered species" campaign targeted Atlanta recently, Loretta Ross, Dázon Dixon Diallo, Paris Hatcher and supporters from SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective, SisterLove and SPARK stood them down in the streets and in the legislature. They defeated legislation that would criminalize abortion as a coercive, racially motivated procedure. These leaders have formed Trust Black Women and rallied allies like Toni Bond Leonard, Barbara Smith, Faye Wattleton, Angela Davis and the Black Women's Health Imperative to challenge the campaign in other states (sistersong.net/trust_black_women.html). The sooner we heed these voices from the front lines, the sooner we'll get behind a reproductive justice agenda grounded in the truth—all of it.

Joyce Follet

Cape Elizabeth, Me.

As a woman I totally agree with Harris-Perry's indictment of a system that doesn't support women and children; but I disagree with her conclusion that women should ignore the lack of a support system and have children anyway. For many years I've been wondering when someone is going to speak up for the children. I am a retired teacher from a white, Christian, rural upstate New York school system. I see the results of single-parent homes. It is virtually impossible to give children the time they need to be successful in school when you are struggling to feed them. The problem is not color; it is poverty. Unless a single woman can afford to move to a safe community with services that support her children, it's not fair to the children to bear them.

Kathleen Mikulka

letters@thenation.com

(continued on page 24)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Nation.
since 1865

For a Sane Iran Policy

As the Obama administration prepares to resume multiparty talks with Iran, it should remember that a key test of the leadership of a great power is whether it can reach its foreign policy goals by diplomacy rather than war. The Bush administration failed that test twice. With American forces still tied down in Iraq and Afghanistan, and with the world economy still wobbly from the financial crisis, the Obama administration cannot afford to fail this test in the case of Iran.

EDITORIAL

The White House must not pursue a strategy that makes war with Iran more likely. Consider the dilemma: on one hand, the president is being pressured to take more aggressive action from a growing chorus of hawks who argue that the United States or Israel should act; either way, the consequences of war for US interests would be disastrous (for more on the hawks, see Robert Dreyfuss's article on page 22).

On the other hand, the strategy of coercive diplomacy, including an unconditional demand that Iran stop the enrichment of uranium, shows little promise, despite the administration's success in gaining international support for strengthened sanctions. As the recent WikiLeaks material on Iran reveals, the administration never consistently pursued an engagement strategy; it did just enough to be able to argue that it tried before moving to a policy of sanctions and other pressures, which show little sign of working.

By issuing an ultimatum to Iran with no clear plan should Tehran call its bluff, Washington has not only committed a fundamental diplomatic blunder; it has boxed itself in politically, strengthening the hawks. At some point, the White House could find itself trapped between taking military action and coping with the far-ranging crisis that would result from an Israeli attack.

It is critical that the administration open up its policy to more constructive options, and the resumption of multiparty talks is a good occasion to do so. The administration is reportedly preparing a new version of its October 2009 fuel swap proposal, which was shelved last year. It would be a mistake to try to force Iran to accept a tougher version of that scheme. The goal of a more demanding approach would presumably be to portray Iran as the recalcitrant party, thereby building support for a new round of even tougher sanctions.

That could look like a shrewd maneuver to win international support for sanctions, but the value of more sanctions is dubious when considered in light of the implications for peace and stability in the Middle East. Sanctions may indeed be causing discomfort in Iran, but the idea that they will compel concessions underestimates the importance to the broad Iranian polity, including much of the opposition, of the country's right to develop a nuclear program. That right—spelled out under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, of which Tehran is a signatory—is defined by Iran as the right to enrich uranium on its own soil.

Worse, a hardline strategy could backfire, solidifying Iranian public opinion behind the nuclear program or, more serious, pushing Iran one step closer to a decision to weaponize (a step most experts agree Iran has not yet taken). It could also constrict the operating space of Iran's moderate political forces and push the government to make trouble for the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan.

There are two ways the administration could work its way out of this dead end. One is to put its weight behind the

Inside

2 Letters

Editorials & Comment

3 **For a Sane Iran Policy**
4 **A Puzzler's Puzzler**
JUDITH LONG
5 **Noted**
6 **Carnal Knowledge**
Motel-land
JoANN WYPIJEWSKI

Columns

6 **Deadline Poet**
WikiLeaks Leaks: The Bright Side
CALVIN TRILLIN
9 **Diary of a Mad Law Professor**
Save the Children?
PATRICIA J. WILLIAMS
10 **The Liberal Media**
The CIA: A Law Unto Itself
ERIC ALTERMAN

Articles

11 **Green Strategy Now**
CHRISTIAN PARENTI
12 **Making Unions Matter Again**
JANE McALEVEY
14 **Immigrant Activists Regroup**
DANIEL ALTSCHULER
18 **Reframing the Schools Debate**
PEDRO NOGUERA
20 **And Now: Anti-Semitism**
JONATHAN SCHELL
22 **The Hawks Call for War Against Iran**
Powerful politicians and think tankers are using the nuclear issue to foment hysteria.
ROBERT DREYFUSS

Books & the Arts

25 **GROSSMAN:** The Road
GROSSMAN: Everything Flows
JOCHEN HELLBECK
30 **MOSLEY, ED.:** In Tearing Haste: Letters Between Deborah Devonshire and Patrick Leigh Fermor
WES DAVIS
32 **"History is the soft medium…"** (POEM)
AARON KUNIN
35 **FILMS:** The King's Speech • The Illusionist • Black Swan
STUART KLAWANS

COVER DESIGN BY GENE CASE & STEPHEN KLING/AVENGING ANGELS; ILLUSTRATIONS BY TIM ROBINSON AND NEIL SHAPIRO

VOLUME 291, NUMBER 25, DECEMBER 20, 2010
PRINTED DECEMBER 1

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Nation.

EDITOR & PUBLISHER: Katrina vanden Heuvel

PRESIDENT: Teresa Stack

MANAGING EDITOR: Roane Carey
LITERARY EDITOR: John Palattella
EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Betsy Reed
SENIOR EDITORS: Richard Lingeman (*on leave*), Richard Kim
WEB EDITOR: Emily Douglas
COPY CHIEF: Judith Long
ASSOCIATE LITERARY EDITOR: Miriam Markowitz
COPY EDITOR: Mark Sorkin
ASSISTANT COPY EDITOR: Dave Baker
COPY ASSOCIATE: Lisa Vandepaer
WEB EDITORIAL PRODUCER: Francis Reynolds
RESEARCH DIRECTOR/ASSISTANT EDITOR: Kate Murphy
ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR: Peggy Suttle
INTERNS: Devon Bancroft, Joanna Chiu, Hayes Clark, Ryan Devereaux, Braden Goyette, Neima Jahromi, Jennifer O'Mahony, Laurie Rojas, Laura Stampler (*Washington*), Michael C. Tracey

WASHINGTON: EDITOR: Christopher Hayes; **CORRESPONDENT:** John Nichols

NATIONAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT: William Greider

COLUMNISTS: Eric Alterman, Alexander Cockburn, Melissa Harris-Perry, Naomi Klein, Katha Pollitt, Patricia J. Williams, Gary Younge

DEPARTMENTS: *Architecture*, Jane Holtz Kay; *Art*, Barry Schwabsky; *Corporations*, Robert Sherrill; *Defense*, Michael T. Klare; *Environment*, Mark Hertsgaard; *Films*, Stuart Klawans; *Legal Affairs*, David Cole; *National Security*, Jeremy Scahill; *Net Movement*, Ari Melber; *Peace and Disarmament*, Jonathan Schell; *Poetry*, Peter Gizzi; *Sex*, JoAnn Wypijewski; *Sports*, Dave Zirin; *United Nations*, Barbara Crossette; *Deadline Poet*, Calvin Trillin

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Kai Bird, Robert L. Borosage, Stephen F. Cohen, Marc Cooper, Arthur C. Danto, Mike Davis, Slavenka Drakulic, Robert Dreyfuss, Susan Faludi, Thomas Ferguson, Doug Henwood, Max Holland, Michael Moore, Christian Parenti, Richard Pollak, Joel Rogers, Karen Rothmyer, Robert Scheer, Herman Schwartz, Bruce Shapiro, Edward Sorel, Gore Vidal, Jon Wiener, Amy Wilentz, Art Winslow

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Ari Berman, William Deresiewicz, Liza Featherstone, Dana Goldstein, Bob Moser, Eyal Press, Scott Sherman

BUREAUS: *London*, Maria Margaronis, D.D. Guttenplan; *Southern Africa*, Mark Gevisser

EDITORIAL BOARD: Deepak Bhargava, Norman Birnbaum, Barbara Ehrenreich, Richard Falk, Frances FitzGerald, Eric Foner, Philip Green, Lani Guinier, Tom Hayden, Tony Kushner, Elinor Langer, Deborah W. Meier, Toni Morrison, Walter Mosley, Victor Navasky, Pedro Antonio Noguera, Richard Parker, Michael Pertschuk, Elizabeth Pochoda, Marcus G. Raskin, Kristina Rizga, Andrea Batista Schlesinger, David Weir, Roger Wilkins

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, SPECIAL PROJECTS/WEBSITE: Peter Rothberg
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, DEVELOPMENT/ASSOCIATES: Peggy Randall
VICE PRESIDENT, ADVERTISING: Ellen Bollinger
ADVERTISING MANAGER: Amanda Hale
VICE PRESIDENT, CIRCULATION: Arthur Stupar
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Michelle O'Keefe
CIRCULATION FULFILLMENT MANAGER: Katelyn Belyus
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR: Omar Rubio
PRODUCER/WEB COPY EDITOR: Sandy McCroskey
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Timothy Don
NATION ASSOCIATES DIRECTOR: Joliange Wright
NATION ASSOCIATES ASSISTANT: Loren Lynch
PUBLICITY AND SYNDICATION DIRECTOR: Ben Wyskida
EDUCATION/COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR: Habiba Alcindor
DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL PRODUCTS: Kellye Rogers
WEB PRODUCER: Joshua Leeman
TECHNOLOGY MANAGER: Jason Brown
CONTROLLER: Mary van Valkenburg
ASSISTANT TO VICTOR NAVASKY: Mary Taylor Schilling
DATA ENTRY/MAIL COORDINATOR: John Holtz
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT: Kathleen Thomas
RECEPTIONIST/BUSINESS ASSISTANT: Sarah Arnold
ADVERTISING ASSISTANT: Kit Gross
ACADEMIC LIAISON: Charles Bittner

PUBLISHER EMERITUS: Victor Navasky

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: E-mail to letters@thenation.com (300-word limit). Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity.

SUBMISSIONS: Queries only, no manuscripts. Go to www.thenation.com and click on "about," then "submissions" for a query form. Queries may be mailed to The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. SASE for poems.

INTERNET: Selections from the current issue become available Thursday night at www.thenation.com.

♻ Printed on 100% recycled 40% post-consumer acid- and chlorine-free paper, in the USA.

Turkish-Brazilian initiative that resulted in the May 17 Tehran Declaration, which outlined a fuel swap with Iran. That declaration was noteworthy because it included an acknowledgment that the Islamic Republic has the right to "develop research, production and use of nuclear energy (as well as nuclear fuel cycle including enrichment activities) for peaceful purposes without discrimination." The Turkish-Brazilian initiative could be a face-saving deal for all and would allow internationally safeguarded uranium enrichment in Iran. As they worked out the fuel swap, Turkey and Brazil developed good relations with an array of players in Iran. Given the enormous stakes, the Obama administration should use this third-party diplomacy to test how far various power centers in Iran are willing to go.

At the same time, the administration should widen its contacts with Iran and expand the talks to other topics critical to US and Iranian interests. As important as the nuclear question is, the future of US-Iranian relations—indeed, the future of peace in the Persian Gulf—should not be held hostage to the uranium enrichment question, especially since enrichment will not be the only factor determining whether Iran pursues nuclear weapons. The United States needs Iran's cooperation on Iraq, Afghanistan and other issues. In the past Tehran has worked with Washington on Afghanistan, and it has an interest in curbing the drug trade there and promoting stability in Iraq, even if US and Iranian interests in that country don't converge. If Washington and Tehran can cooperate on these issues, hawks will lose much of their argument for attacking Iran, and Washington will have greater leverage to constrain Israel. More important, it could open the way for a broader dialogue on regional security. Such an approach would get us back to a strategy of engagement that was too quickly abandoned and that would offer a much better prospect for the peaceful evolution of US-Iranian relations.

A Puzzler's Puzzler

Even if you don't know a rebus from an anagram or a double-entendre from a pun, you have no doubt noticed Frank W. Lewis's cryptic crossword puzzle each week on the last page of the magazine. Frank, who died peacefully November 18 at the age of 98, had supplied *The Nation* with his brain-teasing (some would say brain-frying) puzzles from 1947 until his retirement at the end of 2009. Frank's fans were and are legion (Leonard Bernstein, Kurt Vonnegut and our own Katha Pollitt among them); they were also steadfast and very demanding (they burned up the phone wires when we printed the wrong grid once; an intern had to be assigned to field the enraged calls).

OBITUARY

Frank was a true Renaissance man, a lover of music (in which he had an advanced degree), history, literature, language, botany, mythology, geography, the military, sports, boating, cards—the list is endless—all of which enliven his puzzles.

He also had a past about which he never told all: during World War II he was a cryptanalyst, or "cryppie," for the War Department, where he labored in the dark days BC (before

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Noted.

TARGETING WIKILEAKS: Instead of responding to the revelations contained in the US diplomatic cables made public recently by **WikiLeaks**, at least one member of Congress wants to shoot the messenger—perhaps literally. New York Congressman **Peter King**, an influential Republican who is in line to chair the Homeland Security Committee in the House, demanded that the WikiLeaks website be declared a "terrorist organization" so that the government can "go after anyone who provides them with any help or contributions or assistance whatsoever." Senator **Joseph Lieberman** called on the United States to do "everything we can to take down their website." Top Democrats weren't much more cautious. Secretary of State **Hillary Clinton** called the leaks an "attack" that "threatens our national security."

There appear to be few defenders of the American principle that the people have not just a right but a need to know what is being done in their name and with their tax dollars. Thankfully, a courageous few are defending whistleblowers and WikiLeaks. It's not a blind defense—even supporters of transparency may quibble with some steps taken by the WikiLeaks crew. But Pentagon Papers whistleblower **Daniel Ellsberg** notes that the leaks are more embarrassing than threatening and argues that those involved have performed a public service so that "the American people can begin to get some grip on our incoherent policy and enforce a more humane and productive thrust to it." This response recalls the values celebrated by President **John F. Kennedy** when he declared fifty years ago, "The very word 'secrecy' is repugnant in a free and open society." JOHN NICHOLS

HAITI ELECTION SURPRISE: All around Port-au-Prince, on the November 28 presidential election day and afterward, an amazing number of Haitians grinned at one another hopefully and repeated simply, "*Tet Kale*." The Kreyol words mean "peeled head." The expression is the campaign slogan of 49-year-old **Michel Martelly**, whose shaven pate was on purple election posters everywhere and whose last-minute surge shocked the government and its handpicked candidate. The results won't be officially released until at least December 7, but as we go to press, early reports suggest that Martelly has enough support to head into a runoff with former First Lady **Mirlande Manigat**, while President **René Préval**'s anointed successor, **Jude Celestin**, trails.

Martelly, or "Sweet Micky," has long been one of Haiti's most popular musicians, but until recently no one would have given him a chance in politics. His swift rise is another sign that nearly one year after a killer earthquake, Haitians are fed up with their government's inept, corrupt response and also with the agonizing, unconscionable delays in promised international aid. Martelly's views are vaguely populist, and he appeals to voters disgusted with traditional politicians.

About 1.5 million Haitians still live in tents, and a cholera epidemic is slicing through their country. If Préval's unpopular government tries to block Martelly from advancing to the January 16 runoff vote, Haitians, who have shown Job-like patience until now, will certainly take to the streets. JAMES NORTH

THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT: Of all the cuts and privatizing measures announced by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition, the radical restructuring of Britain's higher education system has hit the deepest nerve. Students, schoolchildren, parents and lecturers have joined to oppose cuts to university funding and a tripling of tuition fees, which will apply market principles to teaching and scholarship and keep students from poorer families from going to university. The three days of action held so far have brought thousands onto the streets, and occupations have been organized on more than thirty campuses. Young teenagers, who will be worst hit by the cuts, have walked out of school in droves. In London many were penned in by police and held for hours in freezing temperatures in late November.

The protests are especially embarrassing for **Nick Clegg**'s Liberal Democrats, whose support for civil liberties and pledge to vote against any increase in tuition fees won them many student votes in May's election. The party is bitterly divided on the issue; 104 former Lib Dem parliamentary candidates have signed a petition asking Clegg to stand by his promises. If the Lib Dems abstain or vote against the measures, we could see the first serious split in the coalition. MARIA MARGARONIS

REVIVING THE 'DEATH TAX': For ten years, a passel of ultrawealthy families have been trying to wangle a multitrillion-dollar tax break by repealing the federal estate tax, *aka* "the death tax." While opponents of the tax have repeatedly put forward small business owners and farmers as their poster children, according to the Responsible Wealth project of **United for a Fair Economy** (which I direct), only about a quarter of 1 percent of estates will owe any tax, and each year only about a dozen estates with significant business or farm assets have trouble finding liquid assets to pay the tax.

Because of a quirk in the law, the estate tax was eliminated for 2010, but now Congress is debating what to do about it. A proposal by Senators Jon Kyl and Blanche Lincoln would set the exemption at $5 million and lower the rate to 35 percent, costing the government $130 billion more over ten years than 2009's estate tax rate. The Sanders-Harkin-White House proposal would return the exemption to $3.5 million and the base rate to 45 percent, which would raise $61 billion more over ten years than with the 2009 rate. Repeal of the estate tax would cost $698 billion, about the same as extending the Bush tax cuts for the top 2 percent. MIKE LAPHAM

WFP FOR THE WIN: The **Working Families Party** has for a decade been a key player in New York State politics, where this fall it attracted roughly 140,000 votes and provided the margin of victory for progressive Democrat **Tom DiNapoli** in the race for comptroller. But the labor-allied party, which is expanding into other states that allow fusion voting, proved to be an even more significant player in Connecticut. There, Democratic gubernatorial candidate **Dan Malloy**'s narrow victory was secured with WFP votes. Malloy beat Republican **Tom Foley** by 6,399 votes out of more than 1.1 million cast. Twenty thousand more votes were cast on the Republican ballot line for governor than on the Democratic line. But the 26,308 WFP votes put Malloy over the top. JOHN NICHOLS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

computers) cracking Japanese and German codes. He was hired by the legendary "Willie the Fox" Friedman, and, as Frank once told me, "You had to be an oddball to make it, and I was glad to be included." As Civilian in Charge of the Japanese Section, he broke the Japanese shipping code and was credited with shortening the war in the Pacific. He was awarded the (very rare) Exceptional Civilian Service medal by both the War Department and the National Security Agency (the only person to win two such medals, as far as anyone knows).

Meanwhile, stationed in England, Frank had fallen for the cryptic crosswords he'd found in the papers there; to amuse himself and friends, he began to make his own. Back home after the war, he found only one American magazine that featured a worthy cryptic—*The Nation*. When a vacancy opened up on our puzzle page, Frank filled it by winning a contest judged by *Nation* readers. Thus began Frank's sixty-two years as our puzzle master—counting back, we find he "set" (the proper term) an incredible 2,963 of them.

For the past year we've been running "Frank's Golden Oldies" while we look for a successor to the master. Early in the new year, we will announce the results of our search.

Farewell, Swank Filer. JUDITH LONG

Judith Long, The Nation*'s copy chief, was Frank Lewis's editor for twenty-eight years. Robert Grossman's portrait, at left, commemorated the fiftieth anniversary, in October 1997, of Frank's first puzzle for* The Nation.

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

WikiLeaks Leaks: The Bright Side

"They describe the volatile Libyan leader as rarely without the companionship of 'his senior Ukrainian nurse,' described as a 'voluptuous blonde.'" —*New York Times*

Qaddafi is not the most popular guy.
I've heard him called dangerous or goofy or worse.
But my estimation of him has gone up:
The man keeps in tow a "Ukrainian nurse."

"Voluptuous"—that's how this nurse is described.
Well, sure, but there's nothing in that I find sinister.
We all feel the need of a treatment at times.
How smart to have someone quite close to administer!

Motel-land

In the story of America, the road is beautiful, the people are beautiful, even the motel is beautiful. It's beautiful even when there is no chance of that, even when it is an ordinary, respectable chain franchise that promises anything but a surprise, or when it is the very opposite, a no-tell motel where the dirty little surprise—of a place just funky enough so a woman can cry to heaven without fear of summoning the police—is what motivated the choice. The motel is beautiful because it is a caldron of expectation fueled by a thousand songs and stories, a thousand real or borrowed memories of the motel as a place where sex happens, or might.

Always there is the promise, but then… the delivery. I remember once picturing something charmingly *louche* while driving to a motel described as being out of the way. It was under a highway in New Jersey. The man at the front desk asked, "One hour or four?" The carpeting was a stained shade of puce. A small paper fir tree twirled "Evergreen" odor out into the room from a bedside lamp, and just overhead in a gold-tone frame a stagecoach hurtled forward across a stormy plain. Dirty in all the wrong ways, at least a paper strip across the toilet seat guaranteed "Sanitary."

Disappointment was part of the romance of the road from the start. The nation's first stag film fantasy was a road trip. In the 1915 silent *A Free Ride*, a mustachioed man and two women are bouncing along in a Model T, the air ripe with possibility. They stop for a pee, a caress, and in an instant one of the women disappears—to watch?—while the other is led to an auto robe spread on the ground. The mustachioed man pounces, dropping his trousers as the camera moves in close for a view of his rather feeble buttocks thumping away. Seconds pass and it's done, the act and the film—as so often with fantasy,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOSE

Presenting the Acoustic Wave® music system II.

Our best-performing all-in-one music system.

When we introduced the original Acoustic Wave® music system, *Sound & Vision* said it delivered "possibly the best-reproduced sound many people have ever heard." And the *Oregonian* reported it had "changed the way many Americans listen to music."

Today, the improved Acoustic Wave® music system II builds on our more than 40 years of industry-leading innovation to deliver even better sound. This is the best-performing all-in-one music system we've ever made, with sound that rivals large and complicated stereos. There's no stack of equipment. No tangle of wires. Just all-in-one convenience and lifelike sound.

Even better sound than its award-winning predecessor. With recently developed Bose® technologies, our engineers were able to make the acclaimed sound even more natural. We believe you'll appreciate the quality even at volume levels approaching that of a live performance.

Shown in Graphite Gray with optional 5-CD Changer.

Use it where you like. This small system fits almost anywhere. You can move it from room to room, or take it outside. It has what you need to enjoy your music, including a built-in CD player and digital FM/AM tuner. You also can easily connect additional sources like your MP3 player or TV.

Hear it yourself risk free for 30 days. Use our 30-day, risk-free trial to try it in your home. When you call, ask about adding the optional 5-CD Changer to play your music for hours – the same slim remote operates both system and changer. Also, ask about using your own major credit card to make **12 easy payments,** with no interest charges from Bose.* Order now and save $100 on the Acoustic Wave® music system II. Compare the performance with large, multi-component stereos costing much more. And discover why Bose is the most respected name in sound.

SAVE $100
when you order by December 31, 2010.

To order or learn more:

1-800-314-3416, ext. G8888

www.Bose.com/AWMS2

Name_____

Address_____

City_____State____Zip_____

Phone_____E-mail (Optional)_____

Mail to: Bose Corp., Dept. DMG MS730A, The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701-9168

BOSE®
Better sound through research®

IN THE HOME • AROUND THE HOME • AWAY FROM HOME

*Bose payment plan available on orders of $299-$1500 paid by major credit card. Separate financing offers may be available for select products. See website for details. Down payment is 1/12 the product price plus applicable tax and shipping charges, charged when your order is shipped. Then, your credit card will be billed for 11 equal monthly installments beginning approximately one month from the date your order is shipped, with 0% APR and no interest charges from Bose. Credit card rules and interest may apply. U.S. residents only. Limit one active financing program per customer. ©2010 Bose Corporation. Patent rights issued and/or pending. The Acoustic Wave® music system II design is a registered trademark of Bose Corporation. Financing and savings offers not to be combined with other offers or applied to previous purchases, and subject to change without notice. Offers are limited to purchases made from Bose and participating authorized dealers. Offers valid 12/1/10-12/31/10. Risk free refers to 30-day trial only, requires product purchase and does not include return shipping. Delivery is subject to product availability. Quotes reprinted with permission: *Sound & Vision*, 3/85; Wayne Thompson, *Oregonian*, 9/10/96.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more thrilling in the hothouse of imagination than in fact.

Lately I've been driving America's roads, where picnic sex and its more prosaic indoor substitutes are secondary to the carnal in its most basic sense, to bodies in motion and at rest; in other words, to men, women and children simply surviving.

It's plain that the American dream of lighting out for the territory has gone awry when the school bus pulls up at the Quality Inn. I could name any chain motel of the low-frills type—a Days Inn or Best Western or Howard Johnson. The phenomenon is not uncommon; it just used to be confined to the obscure motel specializing in weekly rates for construction workers, transient soldiers, ex-cons, drug addicts and writers on really small expense budgets. Now almost any motel might be at least partly residential. But I am speaking of a particular motel near a particular East Coast city, and here two yellow buses have been coming by ever since a man on the first floor was arrested and his 7-year-old daughter, hard up for a ride, went knocking door to door at 7 AM, asking strangers if anyone could take her to school. At least seven children from the motel ride the buses each morning and afternoon. The walkway on the side of the motel where the girl lives with her troubled father, crippled mother and older brother is lined with plastic toys.

A church pays the $324 a week to lodge that family, but many of the fifteen or so families who live in the motel full time are "self-pay." It is unclear why the church pays more each month for one room than the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in town, but there is no mystery why the poor pay more. Their jobs don't pay enough to save. Motel living is expensive, but there's not another landlord who will forgo a security deposit and one month's rent upfront. So they pay weekly, cobble up meals through some combination of microwave, crockpot, rice cooker, toaster oven or McDonald's Dollar Menu, and try not to go crazy with the parents in one bed, the children lined up in another beside it and only a few square feet of bathroom privacy.

I noticed the children before I ever saw the school buses. They are less inhibited than the children of travelers, who always look puzzled when the residential kids ask if they can come to their room later to play. Mostly unwired, these kids play physical made-up games in the parking lot almost every evening. They are remarkably kind and resourceful. In the motel's breakfast room, they know how to find any supply. It seems they eat Belgian waffles with butter and syrup every day; on weekend mornings I have watched the skinny 7-year-old girl work her way through a cup of yogurt, a bowl of cereal, a waffle, several sausages, a bagel and an apple. Some of the kids drink coffee; it's supposed to help their asthma. Like dystopian pioneers, they approach life in the motel as an adventure. Some of them must worry—the little girl looks spectral sometimes—but they seem not to have learned to be ashamed.

A young woman I'll call Dora who lives on the second floor with her husband, Nick, and three sons, ages 5 to 11, told me she's anxious that any day some mean kid will try to teach her boys that lesson. "I mean, I feel embarrassed for them." Nick and Dora fell in love when they were 16. They had an apartment, saved money and bought a house. Last December they lost it in foreclosure, but really the house was lost eight days after the closing, when the steel mill where Nick worked laid everyone off. Nick and Dora hung on for months, but the cord finally snapped. They spent Christmas at a Super 8.

The Quality Inn is cheaper and nicer, safe, clean, with a pool in front and a creek out back where the boys fish and explore. Nick drives seventy miles each day for his new job, and the family spends everything he makes. Dora is looking for work now that her youngest got into all-day kindergarten; if she could make just $300 a week, they could stop whirling in the spiral.

In other rooms are other trials. A couple with a dog, waiting for a house to be finished. A couple with two young daughters whose house burned down, fighting the insurance company for a settlement. A trucker whose wife went kind of mad and stabbed him in the motel; she's gone now. A clerk in the lobby, laid off by an engineering firm, hoping for a response to his online job applications, surer each day that his only chance is back in India. A couple with a baby whose mother, call her Stevie, is wasting away.

Six months ago, when the baby was born, Stevie was beautiful. That's what people say. Now she is sometimes bruised as well as bony. Everyone is a little scared of her man and a little scared for her and the child, but they must be a little scared of Child Services too. Now that the Snow Birds have made their annual drive-through to Florida, the motel owners need the income as much as the residents need a roof. No one interferes; that bit of motel etiquette stays strong. But there is talk: Stevie always needs a ride or $5, $10. People spot her the cash—who doesn't understand being short for diapers?—until the dollars add up and the lenders find themselves on the other end of need. The first time Stevie asked someone for a ride to the truck stop, she came back with $100 to settle her debts. "I don't sell my ass; people like me," she snarled. The last time, after an hour among the trucks, she had $10.

It's Motel-land, and somewhere someone is fucking and laughing in the face of absurdity, but sex is the least of it.

JoANN WYPIJEWSKI

@Nation.com

Expectations are low that the current United Nations climate conference will produce the international agreement needed to avert global warming, reports Tina Gerhardt in **Gearing Up for Cancún**.

Watch **Greg Mitchell** on *Democracy Now!* talking about WikiLeaks with Daniel Ellsberg.

Listen to Ari Berman with Eli Sanders and Tim Egan in a new **Nation Conversation** podcast on the Democrats' future.

Amid widespread allegations of electoral fraud and a chaotic international relief effort in the country, Haitians themselves are surviving with dignity and heroism, writes James North in **Still Awaiting Relief, Haitians Question the Election Results**.

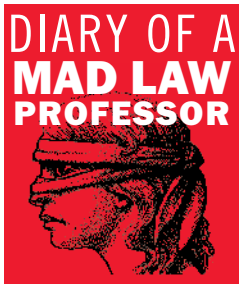
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Patricia J. Williams

Save the Children?

'Twas well after midnight when I came across some morsels of advice from the Ontario-based website familyadoptionplan.com. Under the listed advantages of international adoption is the proposition that "it allows adoptive parents to be matched with children that share their ethnic heritage.... It also allows socially conscious couples to bring a child into a much more advantageous and privileged living situation than would be possible in the child's country of birth."

Contrast that with the site's description of domestic adoption: "One major drawback is that there is no guarantee that the child you want will end up being placed with you. Public adoption agencies serve the interests of the child, not the parents, and will always place the child in the situation they feel is best for him or her.... You must also accept that many children waiting to be placed...come from difficult backgrounds and may have been emotionally, psychologically, physically or sexually abused. Developmental delays and medical conditions...[are] a risk you have to assume as a prospective parent of a domestically adopted child."



I spend a good bit of my professional life studying the ethics of adoption, and familyadoptionplan.com is hardly alone in its assumptions. There are at least 18.5 million children worldwide who have lost both parents, and their plight is largely shaped by North American parenting preferences. From the rushed airlifts of Vietnamese, Korean and Haitian babies (some who later turn out not to be orphans at all), to the rage for Chinese girls, to Madonna's splendiferous beneficence—popular culture too often interprets international adoption through the lens of a "first world rescues third world innocents" narrative. What's missing from this tidy plot is sensitivity to the social disruptions that render so many children homeless to begin with. Here are some thoughts about how to rechannel this mythology.

First, it would be helpful not to disaggregate international adoption from domestic (American) adoption. For example, there is a misperception that there's a "baby shortage" in the United States. This is true only if one modifies the term to mean "healthy white newborns." There are tens of thousands of adoptable domestic children of color. The silence about their plight allows many to imagine (a) that American adoption practices are irreproachably race-neutral; (b) that all children in the developed world are better off than anyplace else in the world (when, in fact, we have just about the highest infant mortality rate of any industrialized nation); and (c) that our culture of adoption is unassailably moral.

The plight of homeless children in war-torn or poverty-stricken places is surely heartbreaking. And relatively speaking, children in the industrialized West are many times better off than the average child in Sierra Leone. But let's not confuse "helping" global crises with the individual decision to adopt a child. We have an international crisis of child protection; but that's not something that adoption alone, or even primarily, can fix. It's just not a great idea to adopt a child because you want to end war or cure world hunger. Maybe you should work for an NGO instead or help plow a field. Such efforts are often undervalued, but they contribute significantly to the betterment of dispossessed children.

To posit adoption as "rescue" from turmoil risks inflecting the personal family dynamic with missionary smugness in a way no child should be asked to endure. For example, if you adopt your nephew and raise that child with the message that you are Mother Teresa for having taken him in and that he's ever so lucky to have been rescued from sluttish "Aunt Sally"... Well, it's got to be hard for a kid not to feel ambivalent about the part of himself that is born of Aunt Sally. Similarly, in many international and interracial adoptions, kids are raised to look down on their origins and "feel lucky"—to their documented distress.

Furthermore, adoption has become a form of trafficking in and of itself. The exchange of money, though facilitated by public policy, is particularly evident in the private adoption context. This commodification allows too many to think it is appropriate to "return" adopted children when problems arise, like so many damaged goods.

One can also observe here a fluctuating eugenic value system. If China values boys over girls, Americans choose girls over boys, no matter where they're from. Color-ism and fad figure prominently in this perverse ranking, with prospective parents seeking kids from Eastern Europe, Africa and South Asia according to cultural images about who is more "like" whom, who is "born smart," who is prettier, who "exotic." But Angelina Jolie's influence notwithstanding, the day-to-day discomfort we have talking about race and ethnicity ultimately leads to the conclusion that a healthy domestic black child must be harder to live with than a catatonic child from a Romanian orphanage.

Finally, the issue of international adoption needs to be examined alongside the developing market for assisted reproduction. More women are seeking in vitro fertilization or are using surrogates (often dark-skinned surrogates in the third world). Assisted reproduction is a well-funded industry that thrives on the idea that family is biological, or that women who are "desperate" to have children can do so only through "their own" eggs or, even better, "designer eggs."

In truth there is a "wealth," not a shortage, of children who need homes. Yet we seem to be narrowly rebiologizing "family" precisely at a moment when we should embrace our common humanity. Without a basic assumption that all the world's children are "our own," we'll never get past that unspoken sense of exoticism and boundary that fuels consumerism and neglect in the social sphere—or solipsism and disappointment in the personal. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Eric Alterman

The CIA: A Law Unto Itself

Much of the journalistic world is currently focused on the juicy diplomatic details of the WikiLeaks revelations. This is understandable, but the issues raised are complex. To the degree they provide evidence of policies at odds with official pronouncements, the leaks are warranted. To the degree they merely seek to embarrass those charged with the conduct of sensitive and difficult foreign policy issues, they are destructive. But let's not allow the debate over necessary and/or unnecessary secrecy to obscure a far more elemental problem with the conduct of US foreign policy: we frequently conduct it through an intelligence apparatus that considers itself immune to the rule of law and unaccountable to the Constitution.

The problem with the CIA et al. is not the intelligence they collect but the operations they conduct. These are—even by the generous terms of legislation written for these purposes, and indulgent court decisions relating to any and all issues of "national security"—criminal. And almost no one appears to care.

To take one example, special prosecutor John Durham recently concluded a three-year Justice Department investigation into whether CIA officers unlawfully destroyed tapes of interrogations (read "torture") of terrorism suspects. Durham's report, issued at virtually the moment the statute of limitations on obstruction of justice–related crimes was set to expire, recommended no charges. This despite the fact that, as one ex-official quoted in the *Washington Post* explained, "To my understanding…there was a standing order from a federal judge that said not to destroy the tapes. That trumps any inside the CIA legal call."

The above came on top of another recent report—issued by the CIA itself—accusing agents working in Peru of routinely violating the agency's operating procedures, which led to the accidental murder of an American missionary and her infant daughter, who were shot down by Peruvian forces in 2001 on suspicion of drug smuggling. While the CIA pretended at the time that this was a one-time tragedy, we now know that similar violations occurred in at least thirteen instances. "CIA officers knew of and condoned most of these violations," the report explained, "fostering an environment of negligence and disregard for procedures." Its representatives lied to Congress and withheld evidence from investigators to evade responsibility. The punishment? Putting a premium on "moving forward—focused, as always, on conducting strong, effective intelligence operations to keep America safe." CIA director Leon Panetta chose to issue "administrative penalties" of an unnamed nature to sixteen current and retired officers.

Unpunished criminal activities, up to and including willful accessory to mass murder, accompanied by lies to Congress, the press and the American people, have long been the modus operandi for US intelligence agencies. In the 1980s, liberals were forced to endure accusations of disloyalty and procommunism for pointing out that Reagan administration officials (and their neoconservative apologists) were turning a blind eye to death squad massacres in Central America. In fact, the truth may have been far worse than we commies could have imagined. As one "former high-level intelligence official" explained—as quoted by Seymour Hersh in a now-forgotten January 2005 *New Yorker* account of US training operations in Iraq—"'Do you remember the right-wing execution squads in El Salvador?' the former high-level intelligence official asked me, referring to the military-led gangs that committed atrocities in the early nineteen-eighties. 'We founded them and we financed them.'"

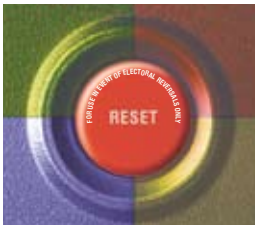
Yet another recently released official report—this one on US intelligence officials' "collaboration" with Nazi war criminals in offering them a "safe haven" in the United States—demonstrates that such official lawlessness has been the rule rather than the exception. In 1954, according to the report, the CIA took care of Otto Von Bolschwing, an associate of Adolph Eichmann who worked with him on the earliest aspects of Nazi planning "to purge Germany of the Jews." Earlier, in 1945, they helped to set up a new life for Arthur Rudolph, who had mercilessly exploited slave labor at the Mittelwerk munitions factory.

In these and countless other cases, the CIA lied to Congress for decades about the degree of its knowledge of the crimes it was covering up. Even now, the full report on the aiding and coddling of Nazi war criminals remains unreleased. (It was leaked to the *New York Times*.) The parts that the agency did release had blacked-out "court decisions, Congressional testimony and front-page newspaper articles from the 1970s" as too sensitive to share with the American people.

Clearly the culture at the CIA or any other US intelligence agency is not about to change anytime soon, no matter who is elected president. What I find more disturbing is the lack of attention paid to these cases in the media. The reporting is there, but where is the discussion of what it means for us as a nation and what is to be done about it? Indeed, within the punditocracy, you will find far more defenders of official torture than people questioning how it happens in a nation where it is supposed to be against the law. (The *Washington Post* just added its second torture champion, *Commentary*'s Jennifer Rubin, to its stable of pundits, where she will join ex-Bush speechwriter and torture fan Marc Thiessen.)

If you make it to the end of Stieg Larsson's marvelous Millennium trilogy, you will encounter Swedish public officials confronting the existence of a rogue intelligence agency doing much the same thing as described above, albeit on a far smaller scale. The politicians are furious, the Office of Constitutional Protection swings into action and, after a full and fair airing of the crimes committed, the culprits are jailed and disgraced. I don't know enough about Sweden to tell you if such a thing would actually be possible there, but, sadly, I can promise you it would never happen here. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



This fall's midterm elections were not only a setback for Democrats and the Obama administration. As a result of Republican gains, social movements for unions, public education, immigrants' rights and the environment face a new and daunting landscape. Progressives may disagree about the extent to which the Democrats' electoral defeat calls into question the strategies these movements had been pursuing. But all recognize that the new political reality requires a recalibration of tactics, a rethinking of priorities, a reassessment of goals and approaches to achieving them. In short, we need a strategic reset. Amid the rubble there are opportunities to be found, not least the chance for deep discussion. We hope this is the beginning of one. —*The Editors*

Green Strategy Now

CLIMATE
LABOR
IMMIGRATION
EDUCATION

by CHRISTIAN PARENTI

In the wake of the midterm elections, environmental groups are rethinking their strategy for addressing climate change. The defeat of the green agenda is measured not only in Republican control of the House but also in the huge amounts of money, time, energy and good will green groups invested in the pursuit of failed comprehensive climate legislation.

TIM ROBINSON

The fight for that legislation also brought out the divisions between environmentalists. While the Beltway-oriented "Big Green" groups tended to see flawed legislative language as a glass half full, the more left-leaning "Little Green" groups—the climate hawks—saw the bills as dangerously inadequate. In particular, Little Green opposed the American Clean Energy and Security Act, passed in 2009 (earlier known as Waxman-Markey), because it set greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions targets—17 percent below 2005 levels by 2020—that were nowhere near what scientists say is necessary to avoid hitting climate tipping points. The bill was larded with giveaways to nuclear power and offshore oil drillers. And perhaps worst of all, it took a dangerous step backward by stripping the EPA of its new ability to regulate emissions through a process known as "stationary source review."

Then, in the Senate, came complementary "tripartisan" legislation—the eponymous Kerry-Lieberman-Graham bill—that contained most of the same sops to industry yet still died a long, slow death by a thousand cuts. The struggle for cap-and-trade legislation, now dead, is undergoing an autopsy. Green groups great and small are taking stock.

"Some Big Green groups thought with Obama as president they were really in charge, and they got lost in the minutiae of the legislation," says Kert Davies, research director for Greenpeace. "The bills were watered down and watered down, and took up huge amounts of time. Meanwhile, the White House and the supporters of cap and trade left out the problem statement. In their efforts to be positive and focus on the economic benefits of clean technology, they forgot to mention the problem. No one was explaining how serious climate change is."

Following the defeat, and faced with an immediate deadline for averting global catastrophe, greens big and small are going more local and becoming more confrontational. But there is wide variation in what that means.

Greenpeace, which had lobbied to improve the proposed bills but did not support them, is refocusing on local actions and alliance building, particularly against coal mining and burning. The fight against coal is one recent bright spot in the environmental struggle. For several years the Sierra Club, Rainforest Action Network, numerous local outfits and, more recently, Greenpeace have waged a grassroots campaign using mass protest and direct action like mountaintop occupations, as well as financial and political pressure, and so far have prevented the construction of 130 proposed new coal plants [see "Cracking Big Coal," Robert S. Eshelman, May 3]. Direct action against coal directly cuts emissions, and in so doing it supports the various regional cap-and-trade structures like RGGI in the Northeast and the Western Climate Initiative (WCI), Davies points out. "Those mechanisms only work if there are some real emissions reductions," he explains.

The Sierra Club, under the leadership of its new director, Michael Brune (who had headed the more radical Rainforest Action Network), is also redoubling its efforts against coal. The Club, which had supported Waxman-Markey and its EPA gutting before Brune took over, now considers protecting the EPA one of the "bright lines" that must not be crossed. Brune says, "Our top priority is our Beyond Coal campaign, to clean up and close down coal plants and replace them with clean energy." Other priorities include building a movement by connecting with local activists, linking these antipollution and antimining fights to global climate issues, and working with the nascent clean-energy industry to help it become more organized and vocal.

This is important because when it comes to politics the clean-energy industry is bizarrely passive. While coal and oil buy influence, manipulate the public discourse (routinely lying in the process) and demand massive government subsidies, the wind and solar companies sit by politely. There are several reasons for this, one of which is simple naïveté. The clean-tech firms, populated by veterans of the West Coast tech industry, suffer from "startup think"—a nerdy mentality that assumes the best widget always wins. But the energy sector is not like the Internet economy, where new technologies often came online unopposed by old ones. When baby Google was first stumbling around learning how to make a billion dollars, there was no dirty old dinosaur ExxonMobil search engine there to crush it mercilessly.

Christian Parenti is a Nation *contributing editor and the author of* Tropic of Chaos: Climate Change and the New Geography of Violence, *forthcoming from Nation Books.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The coal and oil industry are in a fight to the death," says Brune. "They are not about to move over for clean energy. They're going to fight, nasty and bare-knuckled, for as long as it takes. They are going to try to kill clean energy." Still, there's some good news on that front: clean-energy firms did get involved to help defeat Prop 23, which sought to remove California from the WCI, a victory the movement hopes to build on.

Another area of focus is defending the EPA against right-wing attacks and pressuring it to act more robustly. "One good thing about the defeat of cap and trade is that all the Big Green groups are now defending the EPA," says Brendan Cummings, a staff attorney at the Center for Biological Diversity. Going beyond defense, Cummings and the crew at the CBD have petitioned the EPA to be more aggressive on emissions. The EPA has said it will regulate new sources of emissions that pump out 75,000 tons or more. The center has petitioned for a much lower threshold, and if that petition is rejected it will likely sue the agency.

For more than twenty years, this tactic of monkey-wrenching by legal brief has been the center's method, and it has been remarkably effective. The center's lawsuits have shut down massive cattle-grazing and large-scale industrial logging and mining operations on public lands, and checked suburban sprawl, and they are pushing back hard against GHG emitters. Amazingly, the center can boast a 93 percent success rate in court.

But industry is also going to court against the EPA. The agency faces a blitzkrieg of probusiness lawsuits, all opposing regulation of GHG emissions. Among those who have filed suit or amicus briefs are: the Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Iron and Steel Institute, and the American Chemistry Council; the Grocery Manufacturers Association, the American Meat Institute and the National Pork Producers Council; as well as Republican and Democratic governors from numerous states. Texas alone has filed seven such lawsuits. And with Joe "apologies to BP" Barton poised to get the gavel on the House Energy Committee, we can expect show trial–style hearings on the EPA's scientists, administrators, budgets, etc.

Many of the Little Green groups, though gravely disappointed by the past two years, are adjusting easily enough. Stephanie Powell, executive director of the youth-oriented Southern Energy Network, says her group had devoted some resources to lobbying for improvements in the climate bills. But now—like Greenpeace, the Sierra Club and the CBD—it is refocusing on the local direct-targeting approach. Along with fighting coal, it is organizing on university campuses. "We're working on getting Southern universities—many of which are the size of small cities—to adopt green purchasing and invest in energy efficiency, because that causes direct emission cuts," Powell says. Students at Florida state universities have compelled campus officials to buy clean power and invest in energy efficiency, but the decision still has to be approved by the university system's conservative board of governors and campus trustees.

Big Green's response to the failures of its strategies in Washington is, for the most part, disoriented silence. The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) did not respond to requests for comment. Fred Krupp, president of the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), offered some thoughts in a widely read piece for *The Huffington Post*, in which he wrote, "While being more aggressive and vigorously fighting to achieve critical emissions reductions, we—the environmental community—must be more open." In an interview for this article Krupp said, "We need to do more to make existing laws function well. That means defending the EPA, working with states and public utility commissions. But we are also going to shift emphasis toward suing polluters even as we will continue to cooperate with corporations that are trying to reduce emissions."

There are structural factors, though, that will make it difficult for Big Green groups like the NRDC and the EDF to join the Sierra Club and Greenpeace in a more confrontational and local approach. Big Green groups are heavily invested in fundraising (including from the fossil fuel industry) and DC lobbying. To get serious about organizing would require their leaders to first fire all their lobbyists (who are often their friends) and then probably fire themselves. As one leader, speaking off the record, put it, "It would mean they'd have to totally restructure themselves away from getting Senator Scott Brown to say this and not that. Their priorities would have to be something other than rubbing elbows with lawmakers." Greens need a presence in Washington, but it will produce nothing if the movement is not willing and able to threaten industry and mainstream politicians with serious disruption—meaning slow, expensive court cases, loss of profits, public humiliation and electoral defeat. ■

Making Unions Matter Again

CLIMATE
LABOR
IMMIGRATION
EDUCATION

by JANE McALEVEY

For the first time in recent memory, most voices in the social change movement, including progressively inclined unions, are having a hard time spinning victory out of massive electoral defeat. Could it also be that this time we will finally learn the right lessons?

Given the constraints of our two-party system and the differences between the parties on workers' issues, it makes sense for unions to endorse Democrats and for union members to pull the Democratic lever on election day. But for too long, union leaders have tethered themselves to the Democratic Party on fundamental questions of strategy. Ironically, when the Democrats take control of the White House the problem is exacerbated, as unions often mistake access for power. The leaders of the Democratic Party don't wake up in the morning thinking about how to expand social benefits to workers or the

Jane McAlevey, a PhD student at the CUNY Graduate Center, spent two decades as an organizer in the labor and environmental justice movements.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

poor. And they certainly don't wake up and think about how to make unions stronger.

As the consultant-industrial complex linked to the Democratic Party has taken over at most national unions, unions have substituted "messaging" for organizing while actual organizers have nearly become extinct. To beat the twenty-four-hour nonstop lies blasted into American homes by Fox News requires engaging workers face to face—not blasting them with poll-tested e-mails. It takes a two-way discussion to help workers move past fear and frustration and toward collective action to address the problems in their lives. Note to unions: Twitter and Facebook are not engagement.

Rather than focusing on the immediate economic security of the working class (and in this highly unequal country, that means the middle class too), unions have been preoccupied with their own organizational security. Encouraged by pollsters and Democratic Party consultants, union leaders decided to bet the farm on the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). With the economic crisis ravaging the nation, this was the number-one "ask" of the new administration labor had fought so hard (and paid so dearly) to elect. Keep in mind that unions have been trying unsuccessfully to win meaningful labor law reform since the 1940s—when they were much stronger. The Chamber of Commerce and its unionbusting allies were undoubtedly unhappy that Democrats were even discussing labor law reform, but the big business lobby must have been delighted with a strategy hatched by unions that the Chamber could boil down to "unions want to take away a worker's right to vote by secret ballot on whether to form a union." Labor leaders spent the first year of the Obama administration working "behind the scenes" to enact this priority. Not surprisingly, they failed.

TIM ROBINSON

What could unions have been doing, and what should they be doing, to change the equation in 2012 and also in future union elections? Creating a real fight over the state of the working and middle classes by picking up on issues where unions can make an immediate difference in people's lives. The ability of unions to expand their ranks doesn't lie in labor law reform; it lies in the potential for Americans in large numbers to see unions as relevant. With just over 7 percent of the private-sector workforce in unions, it's not hard to see why union leaders are preoccupied with their very survival. But after seventy years of unsuccessful attempts at technocratic legislative, legal and regulatory approaches to expanding unions, there is no time like now to try mass social movement unionism.

Workers can't pay rent, pay the mortgage, get a credit card, find a job, buy clothes or schoolbooks for their kids or retire. They face increased divorce rates as family tensions rise, and they have lost their sense of dignity. They don't care about labor law reform, and they don't care about unions (at least in their current form). They are in despair, and unanswered despair quickly becomes either fertilizer for the fearmongers or the reason to not bother showing up at the polls. Either decision is a disaster likely to be repeated unless unions reset, and fast.

Rather than posting links to the websites of housing groups, how about starting direct worker-to-worker conversations about occupying mortgage company headquarters across the country until the banks stop foreclosing on their members' homes? Rather than suddenly calling for members to picket banks or take seemingly random militant actions, how about sitting down with union members and talking about what actions everyone can take to force solutions to the housing crisis—solutions such as making banks revalue mortgages to the actual value of homes and creating lines of credit so workers can move to places where they might find a job?

Unions need to start connecting with workers face-to-face through house parties and worksite and home visits to ask what's keeping them up at night. Then unions should plan direct actions with workers that respond to the issues facing them. How about taking over the offices of big credit-rating agencies and occupying them 24/7 by the thousands until they agree to erase all the bad credit heaped on anyone who has made a late mortgage payment because they lost their job or their hours were cut back? The housing crisis ties directly to the wage crisis, which ties directly to the jobs crisis. People in this country are screaming for a fight, but the only people offering one have been from the right wing. All these issues have been staring labor in the face for several years. Why hasn't any union turned the crisis facing workers into a crisis for capital and the political elite?

There are two main reasons for this failure, and union members need to declare an internal mini-MoveOn movement to confront them. First, to this day, when asked about the housing crisis, many unions essentially say, "That's someone else's problem. We only do workers' issues in the workplace." Given the crises in all aspects of workers' lives, that response is even more backward and shortsighted than the second reason unions have failed to do what they should be doing: union turf wars. Some of the best organizers have been teaching workers to fight one another instead of how to fight the bosses, let alone how to mount collective action against the broader political elite.

It's not too late. The housing crisis still looms large, and the coming attack on Social Security and other entitlement programs will offer plenty of room for unions to mobilize their base and organize the unorganized. But these efforts should be oriented around something other than forming a union.

Union organizers—paid staff and rank-and-file workers—should begin to take to the doors and begin to meet hundreds of thousands of workers and galvanize a movement to demand economic justice. If unions do this with unorganized workers and together they win campaigns, it's more likely these same workers will consider unionization to be a good option in their work life. With a ratio of one organizer for 1,000 organizing conversations in neighborhoods nationwide, just 2,000 union organizers could engage 2 million people—and that's plenty to create an untenable crisis that the elite will have to deal with.

Ironically, the only organizational security issue that should be taken up urgently by the labor movement has produced yet

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

another circular firing squad: the carefully constructed hate campaign against public-sector unions. The bruising attack being waged on "government unions" from the heart of blue states like New Jersey is a three-pronged jihad against everything the right hates most: the idea of redistribution of any resources to the poor; African-Americans and people of color, who are disproportionately represented in the government workforce; and unions in general (the biggest unionized bloc of Americans work for the government). You can bet this third goal is high on the butcher paper covering the walls in conservative war rooms. Watching private-sector unions abandon this fight and willingly serve up government unions for destruction shows just how easy it is to divide and conquer. The longer we allow the right to name the public sector as anything other than one essential component of the economy, the longer we allow the right to dismantle the only real base of unions and the only real source of good jobs left for many people of color and women.

It's time to empower people to get into motion. We know people learn best from action—it's not rocket science or something we need a poll about. For years we have known that the best issues are those that are widely and deeply felt and that we can reasonably come up with solutions for. Unions would see that these issues are staring them in the face if only they'd listen to workers instead of pollsters. ■

Immigrant Activists Regroup

CLIMATE
LABOR
IMMIGRATION
EDUCATION

by DANIEL ALTSCHULER

Over the past decade, the immigrants' rights movement has become one of this country's strongest grassroots forces. Nationwide, grassroots groups and legislative coalitions have mobilized millions of people to protest punitive enforcement laws, promote legalization for undocumented people and demand access to state services.

TIM ROBINSON

But following the Republicans' midterm victories, the movement faces a hostile environment. How it responds will affect whether the country continues shifting toward restrictionism or rediscovers a middle ground on immigration.

The recent elections may turn back the clock to 2005, when the last Republican-controlled House passed the infamous Sensenbrenner bill, which triggered an unprecedented wave of protests in which Latinos, immigrants and allies took to the streets.

With millions marching and a legislative coalition backing them, the movement resisted the restrictionists' surge and pushed a comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) bill through the Senate. Still, when a similar CIR bill failed to pass the Senate the following year, three key movement weaknesses became clear: shaping public debate, solidifying labor alliances and connecting grassroots and legislative work.

Since 2008 the movement has tried to address these shortcomings. To broaden the immigration conversation, groups throughout the country have reached out to potential local allies, including business, evangelical and African-American groups. Pro-immigrant organizations have also convened meetings at congregations and town halls for immigrants to tell their stories. As Andrew Friedman, co–executive director of Make the Road New York, explained, "This issue is made understandable through the experiences of actual people. Everyone can raise the specter of the negative impact of immigrants. But when you actually look at it, you've got hard-working folks, raising kids, who are going to school—the stories are on our side."

The movement has worked to strengthen alliances with labor, bringing unions into the latest national coalition, Reform Immigration for America (RIFA). In 2009 the Change to Win coalition and the AFL-CIO (which withdrew support for a subsequent bill in 2007, mostly because of concerns about guest-worker provisions) agreed to a unified framework for CIR. SEIU, the service employees union, has worked especially closely with RIFA's leadership, participating in its management team and collaborating with grassroots organizations nationwide.

Finally, RIFA's leadership—which includes the National Immigration Forum, the Center for Community Change (CCC) and the National Council of La Raza, among other groups—has also tried to improve the movement's messaging capacity and its policy impact. To help translate grassroots activism into legislative victories, the movement has created new organizations in strategic states; enhanced its communications platform; built a digital platform to marshal calls, faxes and e-mails to legislators; and mobilized voters.

These tactics worked—and they didn't.

To immigrant advocates' delight, on election day Latino voters provided the Democrats with a firewall in the West to keep the Senate majority. Although there was some concern early this year about voter apathy given President Obama's failure to push for CIR, Arizona's SB 1070 and Republican support of repealing birthright citizenship showed Latino and immigrant voters the price of inaction.

Eliseo Medina, secretary-treasurer of SEIU, presciently observed before the elections, "Democrats ought to be thanking their lucky stars that there are Republicans, as far as the Latino community goes. Because the Republicans are making crystal clear to the Latino community why they cannot afford to stay home." In Colorado, California and Nevada, Latinos' pro-

Daniel Altschuler is a Copeland Fellow at Amherst College and a doctoral candidate in politics at the University of Oxford. He has written pieces on politics for CNN.com, Americas Quarterly *and* The Huffington Post.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

From the Big Bang to the Present

Explore 13.7 Billion Years of History with Award-Winning Professor David Christian

Is there a definite and discernable pattern to the past? Is it necessary for historians to go beyond traditional approaches to address the essential questions? Find the answers in **Big History: The Big Bang, Life on Earth, and the Rise of Humanity**.

Through a historical approach integrated with virtually all other disciplines, this course provides a larger and more complete sense of history than has ever existed before. The first half of the course offers a vast perspective on the past, beginning with the Big Bang, following the history of the universe and the solar system, and ending with the theories and evidence of the origins of life and biological and human evolution.

The second half of the course begins by exploring the nature of Paleolithic societies and the significance of hunter-gatherer technologies. Finally, it surveys the paths of complex human development by exploring human culture—from the emergence of agriculture and the earliest civilizations up to the modern world.

Big History provides a coherent vision of the past at many different scales, each scale adding something new to the big picture and making it easier to understand how we got where we are today.

About Your Professor

David Christian, professor of Big History at San Diego State University, earned his B.A. and D.Phil. at Oxford University. Nearly 20 years ago, seeking to broaden the pantheon of world history, Dr. Christian pioneered the groundbreaking research and development of Big History—an entirely new academic discipline that is now taught internationally. National Humanities Center Fellow and noted researcher, editor and author, one of his books, *Maps of Time: An Introduction to Big History,* was the winner of the 2005 WHA History Prize for best book in world history.

About The Great Courses

We review hundreds of top-rated professors from America's best colleges and universities each year. From this extraordinary group, we choose only those rated highest by panels of our customers. Fewer than 10% are selected to make The Great Courses.

We've been doing this since 1990, producing more than 3,000 hours of material for intelligent, engaged, adult lifelong learners. If a course is ever less than completely satisfying, you may exchange it for another, or we will refund your money promptly.

About Our Sale Price Policy

Why is the sale price for this course so much lower than its standard price? Every course we make goes on sale at least once a year. Producing large quantities of only the sale courses keeps costs down and allows us to pass the savings on to you. This also enables us to fill your order immediately: 99% of all orders placed by 2 pm eastern time ship that same day. Order before January 8, 2011, to receive these savings.

© Corel Stock Photo Library.

Dating back to c. 3100 B.C.E., Stonehenge was first constructed by native Neolithic people.

Lecture Titles

1. What Is Big History?
2. Moving across Multiple Scales
3. Simplicity and Complexity
4. Evidence and the Nature of Science
5. Threshold 1—Origins of Big Bang Cosmology
6. How Did Everything Begin?
7. Threshold 2—The First Stars and Galaxies
8. Threshold 3—Making Chemical Elements
9. Threshold 4—The Earth and the Solar System
10. The Early Earth—A Short History
11. Plate Tectonics and the Earth's Geography
12. Threshold 5—Life
13. Darwin and Natural Selection
14. The Evidence for Natural Selection
15. The Origins of Life
16. Life on Earth—Single-celled Organisms
17. Life on Earth—Multi-celled Organisms
18. Hominines
19. Evidence on Hominine Evolution
20. Threshold 6—What Makes Humans Different?
21. *Homo sapiens*—The First Humans
22. Paleolithic Lifeways
23. Change in the Paleolithic Era
24. Threshold 7—Agriculture
25. The Origins of Agriculture
26. The First Agrarian Societies
27. Power and Its Origins
28. Early Power Structures
29. From Villages to Cities
30. Sumer—The First Agrarian Civilization
31. Agrarian Civilizations in Other Regions
32. The World That Agrarian Civilizations Made
33. Long Trends—Expansion and State Power
34. Long Trends—Rates of Innovation
35. Long Trends—Disease and Malthusian Cycles
36. Comparing the World Zones
37. The Americas in the Later Agrarian Era
38. Threshold 8—The Modern Revolution
39. The Medieval Malthusian Cycle, 500–1350
40. The Early Modern Cycle, 1350–1700
41. Breakthrough—The Industrial Revolution
42. Spread of the Industrial Revolution to 1900
43. The 20th Century
44. The World That the Modern Revolution Made
45. Human History and the Biosphere
46. The Next 100 Years
47. The Next Millennium and the Remote Future
48. Big History—Humans in the Cosmos

THE GREAT COURSES™

SAVE UP TO $390!
OFFER GOOD UNTIL JANUARY 8, 2011

1-800-832-2412
Fax: 703-378-3819

Special offer is available online at
www.THEGREATCOURSES.com/4ntn

THE GREAT COURSES™
4840 Westfields Blvd., Suite 500
Chantilly, VA 20151-2299

Priority Code 39411

Please send me **Big History: The Big Bang, Life on Earth, and the Rise of Humanity**, which consists of 48 30-minute lectures plus Course Guidebooks.

☐ **DVD $129.95** (std. price $519.95) **SAVE $390!** plus $20 Shipping & Handling

☐ **Audio CD $89.95** (std. price $359.95) **SAVE $270!** plus $15 Shipping & Handling

☐ **Check or Money Order Enclosed**

* Non-U.S. Orders: Additional shipping charges apply. For more details, call us or visit the FAQ page on our website.
** Virginia residents please add 5% sales tax.
*** Indiana residents please add 7% sales tax.

Charge my credit card:

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Account Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Name (please print) _____

Mailing Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Phone *(If we have questions regarding your order—required for international orders)* _____

☐ **FREE CATALOG.** Please send me a free copy of your current catalog (no purchase necessary).

Special offer is available online at
www.THEGREATCOURSES.com/4ntn
Offer Good Through: January 8, 2011

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Friends you love...

And a magazine you love...

Hmmm...

Is there the seed of a holiday gift idea in there somewhere...

Hint: We have a fabulous gift card that is waiting to be sent in your name.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Democratic impact on the Senate races surpassed the overall margin of victory, enabling Democrats to keep their majority.

Moreover, in a display of the movement's sustained grassroots capacity, a rally on the Mall in March and May Day demonstrations nationwide mobilized hundreds of thousands of supporters. And in September, after Senate majority leader Harry Reid introduced the pro-immigrant DREAM Act, which provides a path to legalization for young people who attend college or serve in the military, RIFA and its grassroots affiliates mobilized hundreds of thousands of supportive calls, e-mails and faxes to Senate offices. In previous legislative battles, restrictionist callers had overwhelmed Senate phone lines and cowed potential CIR supporters.

In short, the movement showed its ability to convert grassroots power into legislative pressure and conveyed to both parties the risk of taking Latino voters lightly.

But the movement's makeover was not as successful in two other critical areas: developing a unified legislative strategy and shaping the national debate.

The lack of legislative opportunities through this past summer may have been beyond movement leaders' control, but they also failed to find agreement about whether to push Democrats to present a bill without Republican support. Some thought it necessary; others deemed it political suicide. Movement leaders never resolved where to apply the most pressure. Ali Noorani, executive director of the National Immigration Forum and RIFA's chair, acknowledged that "the legislative strategy wasn't clear. And, when you don't have a clear legislative strategy, it's hard to keep a legislative coalition together."

For now, the strategy has become clear again. In December the movement will focus on getting the DREAM Act through Congress. Phone-banking and lobbying have already begun, and the DREAM youth activists—many of whom have risked deportation by protesting and getting arrested—will continue mobilizing supporters.

But what then? First, the movement must become more adept at handling tough legislative calls. This may mean changing the composition of the national coalition's leadership team, and it will certainly require doing a better job of building consensus between national and state groups. The movement needs to get better at anticipating when and how legislative proposals will spark tension between advocates in the Beltway and organizers on the front lines.

The most contentious issue may be enforcement policy. Movement leaders accept that any immigration compromise will include enforcement, but they fear disproportionately punitive measures. As CCC executive director Deepak Bhargava explained, "The question isn't whether we have enforcement but what kind of enforcement we have."

Deportations spiked under President Bush and have continued increasing under Obama. To express their frustration with Obama's de facto enforcement-only policy, pro-immigrant groups have organized rallies and engaged in civil disobedience. Though the Obama administration has shifted enforcement, with prodding from advocates, toward targeting criminals, it may continue trying to use deportations to prove its "toughness" to immigration opponents. Meanwhile, the movement will likely protest ongoing deportations while pressing for the White House to use executive authority to provide relief to undocumented people.

If restrictionists dominate House debate as much as in 2005, however, the locus of protest could shift away from Obama's enforcement to the proposals of Republicans Lamar Smith and Steve King—the likely Judiciary Committee and immigration subcommittee chairs. These House leaders will likely focus on repealing birthright citizenship, attacking family reunification provisions and ramping up enforcement. This will put the movement on the defensive, but as Noorani noted, "Our movement does well when we have a clear target. Lamar Smith makes for a clear target."

The movement will also have to respond to developments at the state level. Since Republicans made gains in legislatures and governorships, anti-immigrant legislation is likely to arise across the country. With legislative contests imminent in states like South Carolina, Pennsylvania and Florida, the movement and its foundation funders may concentrate resources on building and reinforcing state coalitions.

Indeed, state fights are arguably more important because for the next two years the best national legislative scenario may be a stalemate: the House and Senate passing irreconcilable bills, as in 2005 and 2006. If the Senate advances toward bipartisan solutions while the House turns toward restrictionism and mass deportation—and if the movement can ward off malicious state legislation while persuading the White House to reduce deportations—the immigrants' rights movement and its Democratic allies will have performed well.

Over the longer term, the movement must focus on broadening its alliances and shifting the national immigration conversation. Thus far, efforts to share immigrants' stories have resonated with small audiences. CCC has recently tried to lift individual narratives into the national spotlight through its "We Are America" initiative. These stories, however, have never gained anything near the traction achieved by restrictionists' scare tactics. For its storytelling efforts to figure centrally in a national campaign, the movement must expand its audiences.

Moreover, the movement must redouble its efforts to build local and national alliances. There could be accidental side benefits to a nativist surge—laws that encourage racial profiling, for instance, may prompt alliances with African-Americans and other minority groups. And evangelical groups may also become more vocal in response to punitive proposals.

The movement will need all the allies it can get. Evangelicals and business groups can advance the moral and economic cases for comprehensive solutions among conservatives. Such pressure would not likely be enough to get CIR passed in the next two years, but it could help resist punitive state legislation. In Utah, for instance, business leaders, clergy and Republican officials recently signed the Utah Compact to oppose SB 1070 copycat proposals.

For the foreseeable future, the movement's goals will be to fend off punitive enforcement legislation and lay the groundwork for CIR. Even the best-case scenario will entail substantial compromise, particularly on enforcement. But the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

challenge will be to sustain a strong enough left-of-center coalition to prevent future legislation from, as one Senate staffer put it, "going off a cliff" to the right, as it did in 2007. Maintaining such unity will require the national leadership, grassroots groups and unions to work out tensions on contentious issues—e.g., enforcement and future immigration levels—before legislative windows open.

Ultimately, CIR is not just about fixing the country's broken immigration system; it promises broader political change. If the movement achieves legalization for the roughly 12 million undocumented people in this country, it would strengthen an increasingly powerful—albeit diverse and often socially conservative—Latino voting bloc. As CCC's Bhargava argued, widespread legalization could mark "a structural change in the politics of the country that will make the country more generous to immigrants in the future. So, if you want better immigration policy ten years from now, you'd better support and do what's necessary to get the current undocumented population legal." ■

Reframing the Schools Debate

CLIMATE
LABOR
IMMIGRATION
EDUCATION

by PEDRO NOGUERA

After two years, it has become clear that the education policies pursued by the Obama administration too closely resemble those of the Bush administration. They are leading us in the wrong direction and not producing the changes we need.

TIM ROBINSON

The vast number of parents and children throughout the country who rely on public schools are a natural constituency for the Democratic Party. So, too, are the 2.1 million teachers and administrators who draw their livelihoods from public education. Both groups are more likely to understand and support the need to direct public dollars not only to education but to healthcare and social welfare. They are also less likely to embrace the intolerance and fiscal conservatism of the Tea Party and the GOP right wing.

One lesson Obama should draw from his party's drubbing in the midterm elections is that this constituency is frustrated with his leadership on education. Increasingly, public school students and parents are unenthusiastic about the administration's reliance on high-stakes testing and its embrace of market-oriented reform strategies—performance pay for teachers, charter schools, etc. And many teachers have been alienated by the overt hostility toward their unions expressed by Education Secretary Arne Duncan and a growing number of Democratic politicians.

The defeat of Washington Mayor Adrian Fenty should serve as a lesson. Fenty's re-election race was in many ways a referendum on the performance of his controversial schools chancellor, Michelle Rhee, an outspoken advocate of the narrow reforms supported by the Obama administration. Even though some of what Rhee tried to accomplish made sense (reducing the number of highly paid administrators, for example, and holding principals accountable for school performance), Fenty's loss shows that those who rely on public schools can insist that change be made *with* rather than *to* them.

Instead of waiting for this administration to recognize that it should head in a new direction, those of us who know the importance of public education must initiate a campaign to defend and improve it. We need to organize parents, teachers unions, school board members and others around a reform agenda that calls for protecting public education while also calling for its renewal.

For more than two years, a group of educators, policy advocates and scholars have called for a "broader and bolder approach to education" (boldapproach.org). The campaign advocates universal child access to healthcare and early childhood education and extending learning opportunities into the summer. Similarly, several civil rights organizations and advocacy groups have embraced an "opportunity to learn" agenda, focused on reducing inequities in funding among schools and helping schools create conditions conducive to learning and healthy child development. Others, such as the Forum for Education and Democracy, Educators for Social Justice and Parents for Public Schools, have advocated a shift in focus away from test preparation and toward an expansion of learning opportunities that foster self-motivation and higher-order thinking.

Ironically, it may be easier to gain traction on some aspects of a new policy agenda in a Republican-dominated House than it was when Democrats held the majority. On education policy, Republicans are divided into three camps: those who support the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind, those who regard NCLB as an overreach of federal authority and want to see it repealed, and those on the far right who would like to see the Education Department abolished. With such significant differences among Republicans, pulling together enough votes to launch a new wave of reform or to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act appears unlikely. It will also be more difficult for the administration to get permission to use stimulus funds to continue pursuing its narrow agenda.

In the vacuum created by divided government, it may be possible to jump-start a serious discussion about changing policy. But to make the most of this opportunity, those who support public education must be organized enough to present a clear alternative and savvy enough to avoid the pitfalls of the polarizing issues that often divide us. Parents and educators must recognize their mutual interest in a well-rounded, balanced education that

Pedro Noguera, a professor of sociology at New York University, is the author of City Schools and the American Dream *and co-editor of* Unfinished Business: Closing the Racial Achievement Gap in Our Schools.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jomira's Best Sellers. Great Items, Great Prices*

***But read this entire ad for an even better deal!**

The spy glass that made naval history…

ADMIRAL FARRAGUT'S TELESCOPE

(with table top tripod) from us only $69.95*

• The optics of Admiral Farragut's Telescope are 25x30. This means that you get 25x magnification and the great light-gathering capacity of a 30mm objective lens. The scope is fully chromed (over brass) for extra beauty, protection and durability.

When Admiral Farragut fought his legendary naval battles he used a telescope just like this to monitor the movements of the enemies' fleets. This beautiful optical instrument, a faithful replica of the famous original, is about 5" long in its collapsed position and 13" when extended to full operating length.

Enlargement is 25x, which means that it brings everything 25-times closer, and in needle-sharp focus, than if viewed with the unaided eye. ADMIRAL FARRAGUT'S TELESCOPE comes with a belt-loop vinyl carrying case. There is also a table-top tripod for extended observations.

You have seen such zoom binoculars advertised nationally for $150…

6x to 18x JOMIRAZOOMS

from us only $99*

• JomiraZooms focus smoothly from 6x to 18x or anything in between, letting you see unexpected details. Porro prism construction and ruby-coated lenses are the best in optical construction. The 18mm objective lenses provide high light-gathering capacity. JomiraZooms come with a belt-looped carry case and strap.

JOMIRAZOOMS are the absolutely ultimate in binoculars. They fit in your hand and weigh less than 7 ozs. But they pack an enormous wallop in their small body. Porro roof-prism construction and ruby-coated lenses guarantee pinpoint sharpness at any distance. The 18mm objective lenses provide great light-gathering capacity making JOMIRAZOOMS utterly reliable even in the dim light of dawn or dusk. The zoom lever lets you smoothly change the magnification from 6x to 18x or anything in between. Are you watching the pitcher's windup on 6x? Zoom to 18x and you may be able to tell whether he is throwing a fastball or a slider. There can be nothing more useful for sports, nature watching, navigation, and so many other pursuits. JOMIRAZOOMS is an instrument that should be in every home.

The only universal optical instrument…

PANSCOPE

(the complete optical system) from us only $59.95*

• PANSCOPE is beautifully gift-boxed, comes with its neatly fitted leather case and with a plastic "tripod" for extended observations at 15x and 30x.

This is a little optical marvel. PANSCOPE (only 2" long) contains a complete optical system in its tiny body. You may use it as a 3x telescope or as a unique 3x telescope-loupe. In its magnifying mode, it delivers magnifiers and loupes at 5x, 10x, and 15x enlargement. And to top it all, it also functions as a 30x microscope of laboratory quality.

A special stand for long-term observation with 15x and 30x microscope is included.

This marvelous little instrument, developed in Wetzlar (Germany), home of famous Leica cameras, is the product of one of Asia's finest makers. Its coated optics are of superb quality, delivering the image with brilliant luminosity, in needle-sharp focus, with absolute clarity and with full chromatic correction.

Is this the famous Brand "X" watch that sells for over $1,000?

No, it is the Argonaut™ Watch – yours for only $~~129~~* $69

In contrast to many highly advertised watches, the **Argonaut™** is not a mechanical watch. It is powered by an exquisite Japanese quartz movement. Besides the hands and the date disk, there are no moving parts. Nothing can go wrong or wear out. And no matter how many jewels they may have that inevitably happens with mechanical watches – sometimes as soon as within a year.

We guarantee the **Argonaut™** for three full years. It you treat it reasonably well it should last you a lifetime. The **Argonaut™** Watch is of solid stainless steel construction. It is guaranteed to be watertight to about 330 ft. You'll never dive that deep. Accuracy is guaranteed to 3 secs./month. You will need to change the battery in about two years. It shouldn't cost you more than $5. The **Argonaut™** Watch is a thing of rugged masculine beauty. It comes with a splendid adjustable stainless steel band.

And also: Buy three Argonaut™ Watches (for the price of two) and we'll send you this splendid Faux Fabergé Egg Pendent ($39.95 retail value) with our compliments – absolutely FREE!

Hold the whole world in your hand with…

JOMIRASCOPE

8 x 20 monocular from us only $59.95*

• The optics of jomirascope are 8x20 – 8x magnification with 20 mm objective lens. it comes in a neat zippered carrying case. The objective lens can be used as an 8x magnifier. A 25x microscope attachment ($29.95, 3 for $59.90) is also available.

JOMIRASCOPE is so small that it fits unobtrusively in a man's coat pocket or a lady's purse. Yet it packs a tremendous wallop in its tiny body. Its 8 x 20 fully prismatic and hard-coated optics give you 8x magnification, with a remarkable field of 430 ft. at 1,000 yds. Its 20 mm objective lens affords unusual light gathering even at dusk or dawn. What was that rustling in the bushes? With JOMIRASCOPE you'll discover that it was an ivory-billed woodpecker. Do you wish to explore every feature on the moon. JOMIRASCOPE will be your instrument of choice. Much smaller than even "pocket" binoculars and with greater magnification than most, JOMIRASCOPE should be your constant companion. And do consider the 25x microscope attachment of laboratory quality, which makes JOMIRASCOPE a complete optical system.

An incomparable timepiece, an incomparable value…

RADIO-CONTROLLED CLOCK

Only $59.95*

• The sleek styling of R-C Clock makes it an adornment for any home or office. It works on one (included) AA-battery and is ready to go when you get it.

This beautiful clock is clad in brushed aluminum. Its sleek design makes it an adornment for any home or office. It measures 5-1/4"x 4" and can be set on your desk or hung on a wall. Time is displayed in inch-high digits. In addition to the time (hours, minutes, seconds), you also get the date, the day of the week, and the temperature in F (or in C). There is a melodious but insistent alarm, complete with snooze button for those extra winks. The clock is controlled by a radio signal emitted by a U.S. government department; that ensures up-to-the-second accuracy.

RADIO-CONTROLLED CLOCK works on one AA-battery (included, of course). It's ready to go when you get it. You don't even have to set it – it sets itself.

jomira

division of jomira/advance

470 3rd St., #211, San Francisco, CA 94107

*** And here is our "special deal": You may buy any three of these items -- mixed or matched -- for the price of two. The least expensive item is on the house -- absolutely FREE!**

You may order by toll-free phone, by mail, or by fax and pay by check or AMEX/Visa/MasterCard. Please give order code shown. Add $6.95 for ship./ins. for one and $9.90 for three items, except one JomiraZooms or one Adm. Farragut's Telescope is $9.90 and any three items containing one or more JomiraZooms or Adm. Farragut's Telescopes is $12.95. – plus sales tax for CA delivery. You have 30-day refund and one-year warranty. We do not refund postage.

For customer service or wholesale information, please call (415) 356-7801.

We ship the same day we receive your order. Please give order code Z328!

Order by toll-free phone: 1-800/600-2777, or (fastest!) by fax: 1-415/356-7804.
Visit our website at www.jomira.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

includes academic rigor in science and math but also has room for art, music and physical education. Most people want an education that cultivates critical thinking and all children's natural curiosity. They also want practical schools that prepare students for college and work. Our schools should offer both. There are many schools where such progressive and practical goals are aligned. Schools like High Tech High School in San Diego and University Park Campus School in Worcester, Massachusetts, demonstrate that high standards are not incompatible with nourishing intellectual curiosity.

It's up to parents and educators to hold politicians accountable for fair school funding, adequate facilities and reasonable class size. Complex and controversial issues like charter schools, teacher tenure and linking teacher pay to student test scores shouldn't be framed as either/or propositions. Reasonable compromises on these issues have been made by unions and school districts in a number of cities (e.g., Baltimore, New Haven, Denver, Newark), and there is no reason that a balanced, broad-based reform agenda could not be asserted at a national level.

A campaign for support and change in public education can be successful, but it will take work to bring a progressive vision from the margins to the center of political discourse. Powerful private foundations support the administration's policies, and they have been behind efforts to privatize schools in cities like New Orleans, Detroit and Washington. Still, there is good reason to believe that they can be successfully opposed.

Forcing a change in education policy and in our flawed but indispensable public schools, the only institutions that serve all children regardless of background, will be difficult and complicated—but it can be done. It will require the broad but disorganized popular base, which understands the importance of public education, to organize. The need for such an effort is clear. What is not clear is whether those who have the most at stake can muster the will to make it happen. ■

And Now: Anti-Semitism

by JONATHAN SCHELL

NEIL SHAPIRO

When Fox News commentator Glenn Beck recently accused investor and philanthropist George Soros, who is of Jewish and Hungarian origin, of running a "shadow government" whose aim is to destroy the American political system, he was drawing on a rich tradition of anti-Semitic attacks.

It's indeed amazing how often, in the past hundred years or so, the most deranged people, movements and governments have found their way, with a kind of dreary consistency, to anti-Semitism as the explanation for their activities. Hitler (much mentioned by Beck), of course, placed his attack on the Jewish people at the core of his political program—a fact that for all its familiarity still has the power to astonish. When the exercise of great power is involved, something in most of us would like to think that rational motives—even if only ruthless self-interest, for instance—are at work. Such rooted, commonplace impulses would at least promise to set some limits on whatever wickedness was afoot. That they can be overridden by crazier considerations raises a possibility that is more distressing: that, in the old nihilist formulation, "anything is possible."

What is it about this particular piece of insanity that has had such power to derange? The burden of the question was captured in a well-known joke that circulated in Hitler's time: "The Nazis are planning to kill all the cyclists and the Jews."

"Why the cyclists?"

"Why the Jews?"

Whatever the answer, anti-Semitism has not been confined to the right. The century's other colossal monster, Stalin, found his way at the end of his life through all the thickets of Marxist dialectic to anti-Semitism. After a series of anti-Semitic trials in the early 1950s in Soviet-occupied Eastern Europe (the accused were charged with Zionism and "cosmopolitanism"), Stalin began laying the ground for a broad anti-Semitic purge, which was cut short only by his death.

While it's impossible, of course, to assign any single or simple cause to the recurring appeal of anti-Semitism for demagogues, one reason appears to be that by the beginning of the twentieth century it had developed into a full-dress conspiracy theory, set forth by the infamous forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, according to which Jews were secretly planning to subvert all existing governments and take over the world. A clear advantage for totalitarian regimes was that the fictional conspiracy provided the ideal justification for perfectly real conspiracies mounted by those regimes to achieve world domination. There was no better guide to what they *planned to do* than what they *professed to fear*.

But to achieve this mirror effect, in which reality responded to and aped fantasy, something prior was needed. The totalitarians had to cut themselves off from actual events—to achieve what Hannah Arendt called "the totalitarian contempt for facts and reality." Anti-Semitic global conspiracy theories, by purporting to account for the inner workings of history itself, were ideal for the purpose. Indeed, one might say that they provided the gold standard for divorce from reality—for organized insanity that rests not on mere inattention to truth or failure to fact-

Jonathan Schell, the Doris Shaffer Fellow at The Nation Institute, is the author, most recently, of The Seventh Decade: The New Shape of Nuclear Danger.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

check but on the systematic replacement of reality with a more satisfying world of fantasy.

In those cases, conspiracy theories are appealing not despite their nonfactuality but precisely because of it. When the longing for illusion—a hardy perennial in political life—arises, anti-Semitic conspiracy theories, which almost flaunt their defiance of the actual world, are ready and waiting to satisfy the need. Casting off factuality is then not a burden but a release from a burden—a palpable liberation from the ever-difficult, ever-frustrating effort of seeing things as they are.

All of which brings us back to Glenn Beck. He takes to a new level the style of right-wing entertainer-demagogue pioneered by such as Rush Limbaugh and Michael Savage. He can switch in an instant from weepy, self-abasing recovering alcoholic to stern moralist and scold, from clown to revival preacher ("God gives me hints of stuff"), from Woody Woodpecker to bespectacled professor. Most demagogues have something of the clown about them, but in Beck this is deliberate; it is controlled. At the same time, his political importance is undeniable. He is one of the most revered figures of the Tea Party, which stands astride the Republican Party, which is about to assume control of the House of Representatives. The Republican Party, in turn, has been exhibiting in especially aggressive form the kind of denial of fact and reality that is one of the hallmarks of totalitarianism. The most striking case in point is that the great majority of newly elected Republicans are, in one form or another, deniers of what is, together with nuclear danger, the greatest peril confronting the nation as well as the human species: man-made global warming. Such a stance, maintained in the teeth of rock-solid scientific consensus to the contrary, is a tour de force of reality-rejection that has no obvious counterpart in recent American political life. Lesser but still notable achievements in fiction are the frequent branding of Obama as a "socialist" (if not a Muslim or a foreigner) and the claim, in defiance of mathematics, that it will be possible simultaneously to cut taxes and cut the budget deficit—without identifying sufficient spending cuts that would close the widening budgetary gap that must result.

One Republican operative in the Bush years was famously quoted as deriding Democrats for living in "the reality-based community"—a manner of speaking that clearly points to belief in a non-real alternative. That's where Beck has stepped in. With a freer hand than anyone else, he has been sketching out a parallel fictional universe. He is a purveyor of conspiracy in the classic mode: for the past hundred years, history, he says, has been controlled by a secret force, "progressivism," that is now poised to overthrow the American system in favor of "one-world government." Some of this is garden-variety red-baiting, familiar from the time of McCarthy on. (Of Obama's White House, Beck says, "There are communists, Marxists, revolutionaries all around this president.") More unusual is that Beck has demonized, of all people, Woodrow Wilson, whom he portrays as the fountainhead not only of progressivism but also of Nazism and Bolshevism (some of the more startling sights at Tea Party rallies are people holding signs vilifying Wilson, whose presidency ended ninety years ago). Wilson, progressives and Nazis are linked by a chain of wild free association characteristic of conspiracy theories: Wilson was a progressive (at least Wilson really *was* a progressive in most respects); some progressives dabbled in eugenics (never mind that some conservatives did as well); the eugenics movement influenced Hitler; Obama, too, is a progressive. *Quod erat demonstrandum*: progressives, Hitler and Obama are the same! Of all this we can say what Arendt said of the *Protocols*. Its effect is to "reveal official history as a joke, to demonstrate a sphere of secret influence of which the visible, traceable, and known historical reality was only the outward facade."

But not until the attacks on Soros did Beck's crackpot vision of a grand conspiracy acquire a human face—as it happens, a Jewish one. Like the *Protocols*, Beck's presentation—titled *The Puppet Master?*—discovers a single malevolent force operating behind the scenes to control history. While horror-film music plays and clips of history's disasters are shown on the screen, a voice intones, "Eighty years ago, George Soros was born. Little did the world know then, economies would collapse, currencies would become worthless, elections would be stolen, regimes would fall. And one billionaire would find himself coincidentally at the center of it all." Going on to accuse Soros of creating a shadow government, the show states that this "greatly resembles" similar organizations "he has created in other countries," supposedly "before instigating a coup" (among the countries are Czechoslovakia, Georgia and Ukraine). Thus, Beck falsely charges that Soros instigated coups abroad while also implying that he plans to carry out one in the United States. (What Soros has actually done is give support, through his Open Society Foundations, to democracy movements in many countries.)

Like *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, Beck's presentation discovers a single malevolent force operating behind the scenes to control history.

In a novel and especially vile (and also false) twist, Beck, while heaping the classic anti-Semitic slurs on Soros, insinuates that Soros, a Holocaust survivor, is himself anti-Semitic. Beck, who denies that he is an anti-Semite, accuses Soros of having had to "go over and take the lands from the people, his Jewish friends and neighbors, who were being sent to the gas chambers" when he was a boy in Hungary during World War II. (In reality, as Michael Kaufman reveals in his book *Soros: The Life and Times of a Messianic Billionaire*, Soros's Christian protector was ordered to inventory the estate of a Jewish aristocrat who had escaped Hungary. He brought Soros, 13 at the time, with him. Soros wandered the estate and rode a horse. He never took any lands or anything else from Holocaust victims or anyone else.) In a perverse way, the libel is a perfect complement to the history of anti-Semitism: now the Jew is found to be guilty of, on top of all of history's other evils, his own people's persecution.

How seriously should Beck's charges be taken? It would

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be comforting, relying on his clownishness, to assess Beck's whole career as nothing more than the political equivalent of professional wrestling: a fraud tacitly understood by all to be a fraud, signifying little that is more troubling than some coarse amusement. After all, one would not, in a further extension of the mirror effect, want simply to unthinkingly turn Beck's outlandish accusations around and aim them thoughtlessly back at him. On the other hand, Beck's undoubted centrality in the present moment requires that he be taken seriously. There is no doubt that he has injected into American life one of the most virulent and dangerous sorts of accusations of which there is record. His smears mark the first time in recent memory that a major network has leveled anti-Semitic charges in a calculated campaign. History never repeats itself exactly, but the record of conspiracy theories would seem to provide at least some warnings that deserve to be taken to heart: political fantasies based on conspiracy theories are dangerous. Beware gifted hysterics who make things up. That usually ends badly. ■

The Hawks Call for War Against Iran

Powerful politicians and think tankers are using the nuclear issue to foment hysteria.

by ROBERT DREYFUSS

Even talking about bombing Iran is a bad idea.

If the United States were to ratchet up military threats—and, worse, make actual war preparations in the Persian Gulf—a cascading series of bad consequences would likely result. Iran might suspend talks entirely, withdraw from the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, kick out inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency and hide its nuclear program. Many supporters of Iran's opposition Green Movement, as well as reformists and the rebellious business class, would find it much harder to oppose Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei and President Ahmadinejad. Russia and China, which have skeptically signed on to Washington's economic and diplomatic pressure on Iran, would back away from cooperation. Support among other allies would erode, as it did over Iraq in 2003. And the United States and Iran would be set on a path of confrontation that could lead to war.

But as the following incomplete survey shows, that hasn't stopped many Republicans, neoconservatives and liberal hawks from demanding that President Obama start talking tough. Echoing Israel's longstanding calls for military action against Iran—calls reiterated just last month in a speech by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and spurred by recent WikiLeaks revelations of support for an attack from rulers of the Arab Gulf states—the hawks have once again started pressing Obama for action. According to the *New York Times*, a debate has started in the White House over whether Obama ought to start emphasizing the military option. During a break at a recent conference, I asked Bill Kristol of *The Weekly Standard* what he wants Obama to do, since the president repeatedly says force is "on the table." Said Kristol: "It's on the edge of the table. I want it more on the table." Some, such as former Senator Chuck Robb and think tank neocon Michael Makovsky, have laid out a series of escalating steps, including a naval embargo, that Obama might take.

If talk about war is bad enough, an actual assault against Iran would be far worse, even catastrophic. Even an Israeli attack, far smaller than what the United States is capable of carrying out, would be a "disaster," according to Bruce Riedel of the Brookings Institution. He believes Iran would retaliate against US forces and allies in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Persian Gulf. And Iran would have the advantage of greater radicalization among Palestinians and the Arab world in general, along with Shiites in Lebanon and minority Shiite populations in the Arab Gulf states. Instantly, the United States would be engaged in three contiguous wars spanning Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan. According to former US officials who have seen the contingency plans for an attack on Iran, the United States would carry out many weeks of bombing and missile strikes, not just against Iran's fifty-plus nuclear sites but against air defenses, military bases, army command centers, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps and the paramilitary Basij, many in dense urban areas.

At present, many of the people listed below do not believe Obama would ever order an attack on Iran, and the Pentagon—from Defense Secretary Robert Gates to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the military commanders—is opposed. But the hawks hope that if Obama's current policy of engagement plus sanctions doesn't show results, he'll order a military buildup around Iran to show he's serious. In that atmosphere, even a small incident—say, at sea—could touch off a war. And troops, once deployed, usually get the green light.

Lindsey Graham, Joe Lieberman

Along with John McCain, Graham and Lieberman constitute a neoconservative triumvirate in the Senate, and both have spoken irresponsibly about going to war against Iran. In late September Graham declared that war with Iran should be aimed at changing the regime, not merely halting its nuclear program. "From my point of view, if we engage in military operations as a last resort, the United States should have in mind the goal of changing the regime…not by invading [Iran] but by launching a military strike by air and sea." A few weeks later, speaking at a security forum in Canada, Graham elaborated, saying such a war would be designed "not to just neutralize their nuclear program but to sink their navy, destroy their air force and deliver a decisive blow to the Revolutionary Guard; in other words neuter that regime."

Lieberman, echoing Graham, has called Iran "extreme,"

Robert Dreyfuss is a Nation *contributing editor.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"expansionist" and "terrorist," and he has expressed impatience with Obama's policy of using sanctions to compel Iran to bargain over its nuclear program. Ignoring the fact that sanctions, by their very nature, take years to have an effect, Lieberman argued that Iran has only until the end of 2010: "We have now come to the moment in this long struggle when the Iranian regime must understand that we will not wait indefinitely for sanctions to work. If [sanctions have] not produced meaningful change in Iran's nuclear weapons policy by [December], we will need to begin a national conversation about what steps should come next. This inevitably will involve consideration of military options.... It is time to retire our ambiguous mantra about all options remaining on the table."

See also: John McCain

Bill Kristol

Editor and co-founder of *The Weekly Standard* and director of the Foreign Policy Initiative (FPI), Kristol is emerging as Richard Perle's successor as dean of the neoconservative movement. Writing in the *Standard*, Kristol dismissed critics of bombing Iran who "argue that it would open up a third front for American forces in the Middle East," saying, "If we carried out a targeted campaign against Iran's nuclear facilities, against sites used to train and equip militants killing American soldiers, and against certain targeted terror-supporting and nuclear-enabling regime elements, the effects are...likely to be limited." He added, "It's now increasingly clear that the credible threat of a military strike against Iran's nuclear program is the only action that could convince the regime to curtail its ambitions."

See also: Eric Edelman (FPI, Johns Hopkins), Robert Kagan (FPI, Brookings Institution)

Chuck Robb

Robb, a former Democratic senator from Virginia and member of the board of directors of a think tank called the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC), co-wrote an op-ed in the *Washington Post* in July arguing that Washington ought to begin "open preparation for the military option," adding, "We cannot afford to shirk this debate or dismiss it as warmongering." The BPC has issued an alarmist report about Iran's nuclear program, co-written by Robb, that emphasizes the need for overt war preparation, saying "the Pentagon should begin augmenting its military capabilities in the region—particularly air and naval forces—to protect the Strait of Hormuz, reassure U.S. allies and prepare to respond to possible Iranian retaliation." Michael Makovsky, foreign policy director of the BPC and co-author of the report, has called for a cascading series of actions, from a US military and naval buildup in the Persian Gulf to military exercises near Iran to a naval blockade of Iran's ports to, finally, a "strike on Iranian nuclear and military facilities."

See also: Michael Makovsky (BPC), Dennis Ross (White House, ex-BPC)

John Bolton

President Bush's belligerent ambassador to the United Nations has settled in at the American Enterprise Institute, which led the charge for war in Iraq in the early 2000s and today is home to

LAST CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

2011 RIDENHOUR PRIZES

Fostering the Spirit of Courage and Truth

The Ridenhour Prizes recognize those who persevere in acts of truth-telling that protect the public interest, promote social justice or illuminate a more just vision of society.

The Prizes memorialize the spirit of fearless truth-telling that Vietnam whistleblower and lifetime investigative journalist Ron Ridenhour reflected throughout his extraordinary life and career. Each award carries a $10,000 stipend.

We are seeking nominations for the following prizes:

The Ridenhour Book Prize
This prize honors an outstanding work of social significance from the prior publishing year. The prize also recognizes investigative and reportorial distinction.

The Ridenhour Prize for Truth-Telling
This prize is presented to a whistleblower, investigative journalist or organization for bringing an issue of social importance to the public's attention.

The Ridenhour Documentary Film Prize
This prize is for a documentary that eloquently uses the form to raise critical questions, expand public discourse, give voice to the underrepresented or tackle underreported issues.

Deadline: December 15, 2010

To learn more about the prizes and download an application form, go to:

www.ridenhour.org

The prizes were established by The Nation Institute and The Fertel Foundation in partnership with The Fund for Constitutional Government, the Government Accountability Project and The Project on Government Oversight.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a flock of Iran hawks. Writing in the *Wall Street Journal* in February, Bolton repeated his long-held view that sanctions and negotiations won't work and that an attack on Iran is necessary. "America's central focus must be to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons in the first place. Doing so requires decisive, and likely military, action now." Three months later, concluding that Obama won't attack Iran, Bolton announced that his job is to prepare US public opinion to support an Israeli attack. "There is no possibility the Obama administration will use force, despite its confused and ever-changing formulation about the military option always being 'on the table,'" he wrote in the *Journal* in May. "An Israeli use of military force would be neither precipitate nor disproportionate, [and] the intellectual case for that strike must be better understood in advance by the American public and Congress in order to ensure a sympathetic reaction by Washington."

See also: Newt Gingrich (AEI), Richard Perle (AEI), Paul Wolfowitz (AEI)

Reuel Marc Gerecht

"I've written about 25,000 words about bombing Iran," said Gerecht at a recent Washington debate. "Even my mother thinks I've gone too far." He is a former CIA officer who spent several years at AEI before moving to the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD). A neoconservative iconoclast with a wickedly sardonic sense of humor, Gerecht wrote in *The Weekly Standard*, "An Israeli bombardment remains the only conceivable means of derailing or seriously delaying Iran's nuclear program and—equally important—traumatizing Tehran." Gerecht has long favored bombing Iran as a way of forcing regime change, and in the *Standard* piece he argued, "While there is no guarantee that an Israeli raid would cause sufficient shock to produce a fatal backlash against Khamenei and the senior leadership of the [Revolutionary] Guards, there is a chance it would, and nothing else on the horizon offers Israel better odds."

See also: Michael Ledeen (FDD), Jeffrey Goldberg (*The Atlantic*)

James Woolsey

Woolsey, President Clinton's first CIA director, routinely uses hyperbolic rhetoric about Iran. The country's leaders, he says, are "theocratic, totalitarian, and genocidal maniacs" whose purpose, like Adolf Hitler's, is to "kill all the Jews and conquer the region." Speaking at a conference in mid-November, Woolsey said it "may well be too late" for sanctions to work, adding, "If force is used, it needs to be used to destroy the Revolutionary Guard…as thoroughly and decisively as it is possible to do so." Woolsey is a leading member of United Against Nuclear Iran (UANI), a hawkish group organized to shut down nearly all forms of commerce with Iran. Its former co-chairs, Richard Holbrooke and Dennis Ross, hold top posts in the Obama administration. Among its leadership are Fouad Ajami, a neoconservative Arab-American scholar, and Alan Solow, chair of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. Though alarmist, UANI avoids calling for war, and its mission statement says its goal is to warn Americans about Iran's "desire and intent to possess nuclear weapons."

Daniel Pipes

A hardline pro-Likud ideologue and leading Islamophobe, Pipes is the co-founder and director of the Middle East Forum (MEF) and author of a February piece in *National Review* titled, "How to Save the Obama Presidency: Bomb Iran." On the eve of President Obama's meeting earlier this year with Israel's Netanyahu, Pipes explicitly called for an American military attack on Iran. Saying that it is "too late for resolutions, agreements, or sanctions," Pipes wrote in *National Review*, "The only decision left is whether or not to take out the nuclear infrastructure." If the United States doesn't do so, warned Pipes, Israel "should do the job," and he added that "only Israel's submarine-based nuclear weapons can assure operational success." So radical are Pipes's views that he's often dismissed by fellow conservatives as an extremist, but he's a prolific writer and columnist and has establishment credentials. In 2003 President Bush named him to the board of directors of the US Institute of Peace.

See also: Michael Rubin (MEF, AEI), Patrick Clawson (MEF, Washington Institute for Near East Policy) ■

Letters

(continued from page 2)

Can Brits Throw Bricks?

Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

In "*(G)rêve général(e)* in France" [Nov. 15], Agnès Catherine Poirier claims that whereas France has a long tradition of popular protest, "it is not in the British DNA to demonstrate." Having lived through Britain's miners' strikes, Greenham common protests and poll tax riots of the 1980s and early '90s, I beg to differ.

Ben Givan

Tea Party Blues (Reds?)

Ann Arbor, Mich.

A sobriquet for hate-spewing opportunists who have seized the Boston Tea Party as a symbol of justice-seeking protest: Hatriots.

Gordon E. Bigelow

Deadline Funny Bone

San Antonio

The first thing I do with *The Nation* each week is check in with Deadline Poet Calvin Trillin. What a breath of fresh air! Perhaps growing up in Kansas City, in the heart of the nation, gives him such poetic clarity on the foibles of the world.

Lafe Williams

As Many of You Have Told Us…

Diane Simon, in "The Merry-Go-Round" [Dec. 6], writes, "In an effort to 'get' Herbert Hoover, Anderson and his 'legmen'…followed the FBI chief to lunch with his handsome young deputy, Clyde Tolson." Needless to say, the FBI chief was J. Edgar, not Herbert.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books & the Arts.

The Maximalist

by JOCHEN HELLBECK

In 1961 Vasily Grossman was summoned by Mikhail Suslov, the Soviet Union's ideological commissar, to discuss the fate of a manuscript that the KGB had confiscated from his flat. Suslov told Grossman the manuscript was so incendiary that publication was unthinkable "for another two to three hundred years." The work in question was *Life and Fate*, Grossman's epic novel about the entangled lives of two Soviet families during World War II. In structure and spirit the novel is reminiscent of *War and Peace*, and it proved anathema to Soviet authorities because it portrays Stalinist Russia as a totalitarian state, likening it to the fascist Nazi regime.

How do we know this? Before KGB agents searched his home, Grossman had entrusted two copies of the manuscript to close friends. One copy was smuggled to the West after the writer's untimely death from cancer in 1964. Translated and published by a Russian émigré press in 1980 and reissued in the NYRB Classics series in 2006, *Life and Fate* has earned Grossman a worldwide audience. NYRB has followed suit with translations of two more Grossman titles: *The Road*, a compilation of fiction and nonfiction from the 1930s to the early '60s, and *Everything Flows*, a short novel brimming with historical reflections that Grossman worked on from 1955 until his death. Masterfully translated by Robert and Elizabeth Chandler, the two volumes reveal a crucial dimension of Grossman's *oeuvre* to English readers for the first time.

Grossman is often described as a writer who led antithetical lives. There is the celebrated young author of the 1930s and '40s who was repeatedly nominated for a Stalin Prize, and there is the embittered, postwar writer whose manuscripts rarely left the drawer. Some Western critics extol the late Grossman as an anti-Soviet "individual freedom fighter" while regarding many of his prewar works as little more than conventional Soviet set pieces, or puzzles laden with subversive meanings. *The Road* and *Everything Flows*, which assemble stories early and late, published and unpublished, suggest a different view: the work is all of a piece, and its author kept exploring the same moral questions while progressively expanding his critical frame of vision. "We [are]," Grossman wrote, "people of the epoch of Fascism." This was in 1955, ten years after the end of the war. The Nazi onslaught opened his eyes to a number of fundamental oppositions: between freedom and oppression, "life" and "fate," the individual and state power. Over time he concluded that these oppositions did not vanish with the defeat of Hitler's Germany but instead could emerge in different forms in different political systems. How might ordinary people meet the challenges of an extraordinary era of violence and the political oppression of the twentieth century? What can—and must—we do as individuals, not just to survive but to preserve our humanity? During the postwar years, Grossman argued that even the Soviet state was a foe of human-

NYRB CLASSICS

Vasily Grossman in Schwerin, Germany, 1945

The Road
By Vasily Grossman.
Translated by Robert and Elizabeth Chandler with Olga Mukovnikova.
Introduction by Robert Chandler with Yury Bit-Yunan.
NYRB Classics. 373 pp. Paper $15.95.

Everything Flows
By Vasily Grossman.
Translated by Robert and Elizabeth Chandler with Anna Aslanyan.
Introduction by Robert Chandler.
NYRB Classics. 253 pp. Paper $15.95.

Jochen Hellbeck teaches Russian history at Rutgers University and is writing a book about the clash and the entanglements of Germans and Soviets in the battle of Stalingrad.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ity. This made him a heretic in Suslov's eyes. Yet it was Grossman's moral seriousness, anchored by his admiration of the Soviet revolution and its universal ideals of humanity and freedom, that spurred him on.

Grossman died in a Moscow hospital, bitter and alone. He was buried in the Troyekurovskoye cemetery on the city's outskirts after state officials denied his wife's request that he be laid to rest in Novodevichye, the most famous Russian cemetery. If he could have chosen his burial place it might have been, following the story "Eternal Rest," alongside other believers in a world commune. The Soviet century, his life experience suggests, accounted not only for human tragedies, large and small, at the hand of callous state leaders and their willing henchmen; it also produced a luminous writer whose abiding moral concerns derived from Russian literary traditions and the Communist age, and whose questions remain vital after the passing of the Communist state.

The universe of Grossman's late stories is composed of various shades of darkness.

Grossman's first two novels are about the lives of coal miners and revolutionaries. They are socialist realist in style, in harmony with the party line of the 1930s, but as works of fiction they are firmly rooted in fact and imbued with a searching moral voice that would grow more pronounced in his writing over the years, including the pieces he filed during the war as a frontline correspondent for *Red Star*, the Soviet Army newspaper. Grossman was with the soldiers who retreated through Belorussia and western Russia from the advancing Germans in 1941, and he passed over some of the same terrain when he accompanied the Red Army on its victorious march west, all the way to Berlin. He was embedded with the First Ukrainian Front when, in January 1944, it liberated the city of Berdichev, where he was born in 1905 into a family of secular Jews. His mother was living in Berdichev before the war; the last he had heard from her was a letter of July 1941, written days before the Germans overran the city. Nearly three years later Grossman, drawing on interviews with local residents, pieced together the horrendous details of how most of Berdichev's 30,000 Jews were massacred in September 1941. Grossman learned of a massacre on a much larger scale in the summer of 1944, when the Red Army liberated Treblinka. He interviewed the few surviving victims and other witnesses, and in "The Hell of Treblinka," included in *The Road*, he wrote with palpable shock of how the Nazis had set up "an executioner's block such as the human race has never seen."

Grossman's war stories describe the racial hubris of the invaders, the callous blows and insults the Germans visited upon the helpless Soviet population and the vile instincts aroused in those citizens who began to collaborate with the occupation forces. But the writer's real interest was in determining how the Nazi onslaught could be countered and overcome. He found answers in Stalingrad, the city on the Volga where he was sent in August 1942 to cover the unfolding battle that, as many at the time believed, would decide the fate of Russia. Grossman was one of few observers who repeatedly crossed the Volga in September and October, passing from Soviet army command on the left bank into the demolished city, where a few thousand exhausted and poorly equipped Soviet troops clung to a strip of urban rubble in the face of nine attacking German divisions. Grossman's dispatches from Stalingrad adopt the perspective of these defenders, whom he interviewed at great length before sitting down to write. He portrays them as decidedly simple people with commonplace thoughts, yet in Stalingrad they met their historical challenge as they confronted fascism, the "antithesis to humanity." They rose above themselves, releasing their most precious human essence. Grossman had their example in mind when he wrote in *Life and Fate* of the birth of freedom in the ruins of Stalingrad. The Stalingraders were freedom fighters in an additional sense. As Grossman confided to a friend at the time, in words he did not dare record in his diary, let alone publish, their selfless actions would set an example and inspire others, cleansing away the guilt incurred by Soviet society at large during the 1930s, when people aided Stalin's campaign of terror or looked the other way.

Grossman believed that the spirit of liberation he witnessed in Stalingrad would be sweeping and far-reaching. He noted in his account of Treblinka that Himmler visited the death camp just weeks after the German rout at Stalingrad and ordered the bodies of the dead to be exhumed and burned. By defeating the Germans far away on the Volga, Grossman suggested, the Red Army soldiers of Stalingrad had "stopped Himmler from keeping the secret of Treblinka." Grossman underscores this connection in "The Hell of Treblinka" by pointedly referring to the green ribbon of the Defense of Stalingrad medal pinned to the chest of a Soviet officer in the liberated camp, whom he watched recording page upon page of testimony from the murderers. There was more than a trace of Soviet Marxism in Grossman's view of history as coming to fruition in a dialectical struggle between humanity and its antithesis, between good and evil.

Grossman's hopes for liberation were dashed as soon as the war ended. As he wrote in *Life and Fate*, the moment human freedom overcame Nazi inhumanity a new force ascended and claimed the spoils of victory for itself. A feeling of liberation had sprung up spontaneously among Soviet soldiers, imparting self-reliance and a sense of community and purpose, and the Soviet state made quick work of subduing it. In *Life and Fate*, some of the soldiers and scientists who valiantly fought the Germans are sent to labor camps; many others suffer moral deaths working as petty bureaucrats or ambitious nuclear scientists who fabricate new technologies of mass killing. The state did not just suppress people by force: it also exerted its power by "comfort[ing] them in their weakness," storing away the "chimera of their conscience." In Grossman's wartime stories it is the fascist state alone that exploits people's moral failings; after the war the writer widened his lens to indict the Soviet totalitarian regime, and beyond it the other nations battling for global supremacy in the cold war, violating the interests of humanity. In "Abel (August 6)," a story inexplicably left out of the present collection, Grossman shows the corrosive impact of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima on the crew of the *Enola Gay*.

The universe of Grossman's late stories is composed of various shades of darkness. Even if, in the twentieth century, humans couldn't escape their fate, by which Grossman meant their fatedness, to live and often die at the hands of state violence, they could honor a moral obligation to cultivate their humanity. Grossman illustrates this poignantly in a story from the early '60s that revisits the years of the war. "In Kislovodsk" tells of a doctor who is the head physician of a government sanitarium in a Caucasian spa town. A worldly and elegant man, drawn to a life of comfort and content with himself, the doctor sees no point in being evacuated from the advancing Germans, opting instead to wait them out. Nothing happens during the initial weeks of the occupation, but then a German officer

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

3rd Annual Online Auction

THE Nation.

3rd Annual Online Auction

WWW.THENATION.CMARKET.COM

Rush! Act NOW!

Get a chance to own a piece of history, a piece of *The Nation*

Bidding ends December 8th

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

visits the doctor and orders him to surrender to the Gestapo the Red Army wounded convalescing in the sanitarium. The German's visit interferes with the doctor's social calendar—he and his wife have made plans to attend the theater. That night, they dress in their best evening clothes. After a sumptuous supper at home, with wine, caviar and dancing, they proceed to kiss their porcelain cups and stroke their mahogany furniture. "Then, in a harsh voice, she said, 'And now poison me, like a mad dog—and yourself too!'" The couple's action overrides and redeems the petty corruptions of the soul that had accumulated over a lifetime.

In *Everything Flows*, no one in Stalin's Soviet Union escapes the regime's corrupting influence. Millions of citizens kept the system in motion, as bureaucrats, avid informants or passive collaborators who turned their backs to the suffering of others. After Stalin's death in 1953 they had to face questions about their past. For Grossman, few would pass the litmus test of moral responsibility.

The story's central figure is Ivan Grigoryevich, a former political prisoner. Released after a lifetime spent in a labor camp, he arrives in Moscow by train from Siberia on an autumn morning, his destination the home of his cousin Nikolay, to whom he has sent a telegram announcing his arrival. Nikolay's wife, Maria, is troubled by the news. A former political convict spells trouble; her husband's career as a scientist might suffer. Nikolay chastises her for saying this, but secretly he shares her worries. Just before Ivan arrives Nikolay is overcome with emotion. He wants to confess to Ivan: to repent for lacking the courage to write to him even one letter after hearing of his arrest, and to detail the many petty and vile aspects of his existence as a state bureaucrat. The three have dinner, and the atmosphere at the table is cold. Rather than confessing, Nikolay gloats about his achievements as a Soviet scientist, addressing his quiet cousin with condescending affection. Ivan declines a halfhearted offer to stay the night; he takes a night train to Leningrad in search of a female friend from his student years who had written to him repeatedly before falling silent. It turns out that she is married. Ivan then travels to an industrial city in the south where he finds a job as a metalworker in a small shop. He lodges with the widow of a sergeant who died in the war.

Grossman's language in the novella is laconic, a far cry from the epic bravado of *Life and Fate*. A character's vital traits are etched in a few lines. Ivan is introduced on the train to Moscow as a "thin old man" "with gray temples and exhausted eyes," incongruously dressed in a black sateen shirt, with too-short sleeves and "white buttons on the collar and chest that made it look like the shirt of a child." Other passengers think of him as a "gray-haired old peasant," but the narrator's probing gaze establishes Ivan's childlike moral purity.

Grossman's moral stance in *Everything Flows* is relentless, and not just toward Nikolay. Ivan's story is intercut with a mock trial of four "Judases"—defendants who, acting with different motivations and under different pressures, had denounced other citizens during Stalin's reign. Each man justifies his actions; they are aided by a defense counsel who eloquently postulates their innocence. The narrator uses the pronoun "we" to invite the reader into the moral drama. In the end, Grossman indicts everyone in the room—not just the defendants and their prosecutor but the reader, too, and the narrator: "All the living are guilty." A friend of Grossman's once recalled how the writer had visited the editor of a literary journal that, under intense pressure, had withdrawn its endorsement of Grossman's novel *For a Just Cause*, from 1952. The editor, with whom Grossman had been on friendly terms, asked him, "What do you expect? That I put my party card on the table for your work?" "Exactly," Grossman replied.

Ivan and the soldier's widow, Anna Sergeevna, become lovers. Ivan is flooded by traumatic memories of his years in Siberia and shares them with Anna. In turn, she confesses her role in the terrible famine she witnessed in Ukraine in the 1930s. She had been a bookkeeper in a newly established collective farm and felt only revulsion toward the coarse, "subhuman" peasants who were being channeled into state farms while zealous party activists deprived them of their grain.

> The whole village was howling, without mind, without heart. It was a noise like leaves in the wind, or creaking straw. It made me angry. Why did they have to howl so pitifully? They had ceased to be human—so why were they crying so pitifully? You'd have to be made of stone to carry on eating your ration of bread to the sound of that howling. I used to go out into the fields with my bread ration; I'd stop—and I could still hear them howling. I'd go a bit farther—and it would seem they'd gone silent. Then I'd go farther still—and I could hear it again. Only by then it was from the next village along. It would seem as if, along with the people, the whole earth had begun to howl. "Who's going to hear them?" I'd think. "There's no God."

For Grossman, reared in an atheist society, there was no God, either, but there was humanity as an ideal. The only way to liberate oneself from one's past failings toward society is by coming to terms with them through acts of rigorous self-examination and shared storytelling. The living are indebted to the millions of people who have died at the hands of modern state power; in remembering the dead the living can restore their own humanity.

Writing in the immediate aftermath of Stalin's death, Grossman was one of the earliest, most searching and humane investigators of the totalitarian condition. Compare his psychological insights with the accusatory pen of his near contemporary Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who sought to vilify Communist beliefs rather than understand them. Or recall Anna Akhmatova's famous words, that with the opening of the prison camps "two Russias will look each other in the eye: the one that sent these people to the camps and the one that came back." Readers of Grossman will learn about the gray area of the psyche that lies between the two Russias; they will also learn more about themselves.

Robert Chandler, the editor of *Everything Flows*, incorrectly refers to the famine of 1932–33, during which as many as 5 million people perished, as a Ukrainian "terror famine." The famine resulted from a brutal collectivization campaign that did not target Ukrainians alone but other grain-growing regions of the Soviet Union as well. Grossman pointedly writes about "the death by famine of the peasants of the Ukraine, the Don, and the Kuban." The story of the famine as a uniquely Ukrainian genocide was propagated by former Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko in an attempt to create a sacrificial founding myth for present-day Ukraine. Grossman would have objected to any attempt to appropriate the history of past suffering for the purposes of aggrandizing state power.

Not long after she tells Ivan about the famine, Anna is diagnosed with cancer and dies. In an attempt to maintain a dialogue with her, Ivan jots down thoughts in a notebook about "the truth of Russian life, what it was that linked past and present." His reflections amount to an indictment of ruthless leaders,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Regain the use of your second floor or basement today!

Millions of Americans have been trapped on the first floor of their home… until now.

Introducing Easy Climber™, the dependable and easy-to-install solution to stay safe in the home you love.

Your doctor has told you to stop climbing the stairs in your home for health reasons. Your kids are worried you'll fall on the stairs. Even you are concerned that you'll trip and fall. Until now, your options were limited. You could try and sell the home you love in this shaky economic environment and move into a one-story home. Now, thanks to an innovative company specializing in developing products for Boomers and Beyond™, there's a better way. The Easy Climber™ lets you take back your second floor or your basement, providing you with years of safety and security.

Your home is where you raised your children, and is your most valuable investment, and adding Easy Climber™ can enhance its value. Why spend a lot for installation when this system has been designed to be installed by almost anyone, with only a drill and a screwdriver, in a matter of hours. You'll get the satisfaction of knowing the job was done right… not to mention the money you'll save. We'll include a helpful booklet to walk you, or someone you trust through the simple installation process, and our helpful product experts will be standing by to help you at anytime.

If you or someone you love lives in a home with more than one floor, the staircase can be more than an inconvenience, it can be a health threat. Whether it's due to mobility issues or cardiac concerns, why risk your life climbing stairs when an easy solution is only a phone call away? You'll be surprised how easy, simple, and affordable this system is. It features a reliable, aircraft-grade cable drive that's been tested over 30,000 cycles, and comes with an exclusive lifetime warranty* on the drive train. Call our toll-free number now, and a friendly, knowledgeable product expert can answer all of your questions and help you get on the road to independence and safety in the home. 350 lb. weight capacity.

What to look for

Quality Construction and Dependability: Look for a cable drive system that uses high-grade cable. Go for one that has a weight capacity of at least 300 pounds. Has the product been tested over thousands and thousands of cycles?

Safety: Insist on built-in safety sensors to stop the chair upon encountering any obstruction. Make sure there's a swivel safety switch that prevents the lift from operating if you are not in the proper position. Don't forget the seat belt!

Flexibility: Look for a system that can be installed on either side of the staircase, a control that can be put on either side of the chair and has multiple call/send controls. There are systems out there that let you choose either AC or DC operation.

Warranty*: Some systems are backed by limited drive-train and parts warranties—why stop there? Insist on a lifetime warranty on the drive train.❖

• Lifetime warranty*
• 10 safety sensors
• Swivel-style seat
• 350 lb. capacity
• Available in AC or DC models
• Easy to use
• Seat belt
firstSTREET exclusive not available in stores

SPECIAL OFFER…

we recognize that our current economy has affected all of us, especially those on fixed incomes. For this reason, we have worked with our manufacturer to provide you with additional savings. Please call now to receive our

NEW LOW PRICE!

Easy Climber™

Call now for more information

Please mention promotional code **41567.**

For fastest service, call toll-free 24 hours a day.

1-888-690-0785

We accept all major credit cards, or if you choose, you can pay by check over the phone. To order by mail, please call for details.

firstSTREET for Boomers and Beyond®

1998 Ruffin Mill Road
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

www.easyclimber.com

55748 Copyright © 2009 by firstSTREET for Boomers and Beyond, Inc. All rights reserved.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from Peter the Great to Stalin, who consistently placed the interests of the state over and against human dignity and freedom. In *Life and Fate*, a doubting old Bolshevik is brought to the verge of heresy when he realizes that in attacking the state "he would have to condemn Lenin…! This was the edge of the abyss." Ivan walks off the edge by squarely attacking Lenin, a revolutionary who knew well the dearth of personal and social freedoms in Russia but who upon coming to power sacrificed the revolutionary agenda of liberation to the cold interests of state power. Turning against the ideas of human dignity that had come to Russia from the West, he built a powerful state apparatus that resurrected in spirit, if not practice, Russian serfdom. The state that should have become a means toward the end of freedom became an end in itself. Stalin would perfect and extend the instruments set into place by his teacher.

While chipping away at the Soviet state, Grossman retained his belief in the ideas of humanity and freedom that he claimed were embodied in the original script of the Soviet revolution. He remained convinced that the Soviet soldiers fighting in World War II had heroically sacrificed themselves for the future of humanity. But Grossman was also a writer shaped by a century of Russian thought. He preferred the philosophic views of the "Westernizers" to the "Slavophiles" and their mystical belief in the Russian "soul" as a harbinger of political freedom. As a writer he practiced an aesthetic of critical realism that can be traced to the works of Turgenev and Tolstoy, among other novelists of prerevolutionary Russia. Like them, Grossman judged the merits of a literary work by whether it proved useful to the cause of social progress. A writer's primary task was to educate and enlighten, to show readers how to tap into their potential and rise up to become moral "personalities" who would lead Russia out of its oppressive past. Crucially, this aesthetic also had a self-reflexive dimension: there was to be no more separation between art and reality, literature and life. Only on the strength of such involvement could the writer claim moral authority. It is for this reason that *Everything Flows* has such a personal ring and why the narrator exhorts himself as much as he does his characters and readers. It is also why the story of Ivan Grigoryevich and the narrator's authorial musings become intertwined and fully merge in the end.

After Anna's death, Ivan travels to the coastal town on the Black Sea where he had spent his childhood. From the window of the train he absorbs the sight of the green-black waters:

> The wind and the sea had been there when the investigator summoned him for interrogations during the night. They had been there while a grave was being dug for a prisoner who had died in transit. They had been there while guard dogs barked beneath the barrack windows and the snow creaked beneath the boots of the guards. The sea was eternal, and the eternity of its freedom seemed to Ivan Grigoryevich to be akin to indifference.

This scene may explain the novella's title. Like the flow of the sea, the human condition is in constant flux. It does not surge inexorably from past oppression to future liberation, nor does it herald the victory of state power, which for all its supremacy is fleeting. Like history, human nature is open-ended; people are capable of doing evil as much as good. Mikhail Suslov had every reason to fear Vasily Grossman; the writer sought to probe the historical fabric and future potential of his society. Perhaps it's because of this stance that his work is finding its way back into print, and much sooner than Suslov predicted.

A muted optimism imbues the closing moments of Ivan Grigoryevich's story, and Vasily Grossman's life. Ivan stands alone beholding the few stones shining white in the dusty grass covering the site of his childhood home. Ivan is "gray-haired, stoop-shouldered, yet still the same as ever, unchanged." The ethically charged last words of the sentence in Russian, *vsyo tot-zhe* (still the same as ever), echo and subtly invert the title phrase, *vsyo techot* (everything flows). ■

NYRB CLASSICS

Patrick Leigh Fermor at his home in Greece

A Traveler's Tale

by WES DAVIS

In Tearing Haste
Letters Between Deborah Devonshire and Patrick Leigh Fermor.
Edited by Charlotte Mosley.
New York Review Books.
390 pp. Paper $30.

At a Chelsea-to-Richmond boating party held sometime in the early 1950s, the Duchess of Devonshire, then a beautiful young woman of 30, met a dashing man, some five years her senior, who was dressed as a Roman gladiator and armed with a net and trident. It was a look she thought suited him.

The fancy-dress gladiator was Patrick Leigh Fermor, a former officer in Britain's Special Operations Executive (SOE), a covert unit that aided resistance movements throughout occupied Europe, and an up-and-coming writer best known at the time for kidnapping a German general during the war. He had crossed paths with the duchess

Wes Davis is a freelance writer and the editor of An Anthology of Modern Irish Poetry.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

before and remembered her clearly from a regimental ball in 1940, when she was still Deborah Mitford—the youngest of the soon-to-be-famous Mitford sisters. She was then engaged to Andrew Cavendish, a tall naval officer and younger son of the Tenth Duke of Devonshire who had no expectation of inheriting his father's title until the war took his older brother's life four years later. Leigh Fermor had watched the couple dance their way through the evening, "utterly rapt, eyes shut, as though in a trance." Mitford had not noticed him.

But when they met again—as duchess and gladiator—Deborah Devonshire and Patrick Leigh Fermor struck up a friendship that has endured for more than half a century. *In Tearing Haste*, a collection of their letters newly available in this country, gives the impression that the conversation that started at a boating party so many summers ago has never stopped. Spanning 1954 to 2007, the volume reads like an accidental memoir of a disappearing world stretching from the manor houses of the English aristocracy to the olive groves of Greece, its people and places rendered with a kind of care that's becoming scarce in our age of helter-skelter communication. At the same time, the book's title, a phrase deriving from Leigh Fermor's habit of dashing off messages "with a foot in the stirrup," captures the vigor and bustle of the lives that nourished the correspondence. I once happened upon the manuscript of a chatty letter Leigh Fermor had written in 1944 to an Englishwoman stationed in Cairo. Amusingly composed and illustrated with a witty hand-drawn cartoon, it closed with Leigh Fermor mentioning offhand that he was in hiding on occupied Crete and that an undercover runner was waiting outside to receive the communication.

In Tearing Haste is engaging from start to finish. There isn't a dull letter among Charlotte Mosley's selections. Even her annotations, often incorporating information from the book's two correspondents, are as surprising as they are informative. One biographical note on the painter Augustus John includes Deborah Devonshire's recollection of meeting him in London: "He looked me up and down and said, 'Have you got children?' 'Yes.' Another long look. 'Did you suckle them?'" More than anything else, the collection is important as an addition to Leigh Fermor's body of work, both because his letters constitute a larger portion of the volume and because the writing in them harmonizes with the books that established his literary reputation. But let it be said that the Duchess of Devonshire is no slouch either. Her letters, though generally shorter and less frequent than Leigh Fermor's, share his wit and many of his interests—a fascination with language, for example, or with the byways of English and European history. She puts a charming twist on these topics while adding a few bright threads of her own to the correspondence.

Deborah Devonshire's books—beginning with *The House* (1982) and *The Estate* (1990)—focus largely on the management of Chatsworth, the massive estate in Derbyshire that she and her husband put into charitable trust and opened to the public in 1981. (The house was a stand-in for Mr. Darcy's Pemberley in a film adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, and throughout the letters Leigh Fermor refers to it as "Dingley Dell," after Mr. Wardle's house in *The Pickwick Papers*.) As a writer, she is best when describing the seasonal rhythms of country life (the arrival of the year's pullets, say) or assessing the gamut of rural arts (from drystone walling to mushroom gathering) and tilling their linguistic soil. In *Counting My Chickens*, a collection of notes and essays published in 2001, she remembers leaving Leigh Fermor "stumped" by the meaning of words gleaned from the glossary of a pamphlet about sheep. "One sheep disease," she recalls, "has regional names of intriguing diversity: Sturfy, bleb, turnstick, paterish, goggles, dunt, and pedro all are gid." On the same page she can be found rhapsodizing over "the glorious language of the 1662 prayer book, with its messages of mystery and imagination."

She takes any opportunity to undercut the preconceived notions one might have about a duchess's likes and dislikes. "I buy most of my clothes at agricultural shows," she says in *Counting My Chickens*, "and good stout things they are." For the playwright Tom Stoppard, who contributed an introduction to the book, this was one of her most characteristic revelations. For me, a close runner-up is her discussion of flower gardening on a grand estate, where she admits, "I prefer vegetables." Many of her stories turn on a similar blend of unexpected rusticity and unflagging old-school civility. In an essay about the life the Mitfords led for a time on the island of Inchkenneth in the Hebrides, she describes traveling by train in the company of a goat, a whippet and a Labrador back to her sister Nancy's house in Oxfordshire when the war broke out. "I milked the goat in the first-class waiting room," she confesses, "which I should not have done, as I only had a third-class ticket."

For all her modesty, the duchess isn't embarrassed to mention boldface names that have sailed in and out of her social circle. (They range from Fred Astaire to the Queen Mother, the latter called "Cake" when she appears in the letters.) The humor in one anecdote depends on knowing that John F. Kennedy was intimate enough with the duchess to employ her nickname. This caused some confusion when her uncle Harold Macmillan, then prime minister, found himself involved in a telephone conversation with the American president about matters involving Castro, SEATO and NATO. It took him a moment to switch tracks when Kennedy asked, "And how's Debo?" (Evelyn Waugh, a friend of hers, might well have written the scene.) In the letters, Kennedy is counted among the "bodies to be worshipped," and several entries describe the friendship that developed between JFK and the duchess in the years between his inauguration and his death.

In Tearing Haste reads like an accidental memoir from a disappearing world.

Her relationship with Leigh Fermor has many dimensions, its ardor fueled by humor, charisma and delight in a good tale. The revealing joke that runs through *In Tearing Haste* is that Devonshire is not a reader and that despite her lively correspondence with Leigh Fermor, she can't manage to read his books. She praises one of his letters not for its vivid language but because it has instructions about which parts to skip. Leigh Fermor takes revenge in another letter, marking a set of passages with notes "don't skip" and "ditto." The bit he wants her to see—a foray into history by way of language—might well have been lifted from one of the books that made him famous: "The inhabitants are *Koutzovlachs* who speak a v. queer Latin dialect akin both to Rumanian and Italian. Some say they are Rumanian nomad shepherds who wandered here centuries ago with their flocks and never found their way home again. Others, more plausibly, say they are the descendants of Roman legionaries, speaking a corrupt camp Latin, stationed here to guard the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

high passes of the Pindus, miles from anywhere."

When Waugh sent the duchess a copy of his biography of Ronald Knox in 1959, she was pleased with his personal inscription but put the book down without delving further into its contents. It was a guest who finally flipped through the pages, only to find, as a letter to Leigh Fermor records, that they were "ALL BLANK, just lovely sheets of paper with gold edges & never a word on one of them. That's the sort of book which suits me down to the ground. Good Old Evie." Years later she listed this custom edition among her "unstealables"—books so precious she hoards them in her room to deter casual theft by her guests—along with other Waugh books, "with pages covered in print, dash it." Even the books she does admire help to cultivate the anti-literary stance. "Most precious," she says in *Counting My Chickens*, "is *The Last Train to Memphis: The Rise of Elvis Presley*. If that goes, I give up." (Stoppard once gave her a signed photo of Presley and later recalled, "I've seldom scored such a success with a house present.") Devonshire comes by her resistance to books—or the pose—honestly. As she mentions in a letter written in 1985, Mitford family legend had it that her father read Jack London's *White Fang* as a young man and found the book so satisfying he never read another. She says the same about her reading Bruce Chatwin's *On the Black Hill*, but qualifies the assertion, "if it's the fellow I think it is."

The duchess certainly hasn't sidestepped writing of a particular sort. In a letter from 1971, she reports to Leigh Fermor: "I have written an article about Haflingers for *Riding* & one about the goat I liked best for the *British Goat Society's Year Book*. Two publications which I feel you may not subscribe to." It was clear to Leigh Fermor, however, that his correspondent wasn't owning up to her literary flair. When two of her sisters published volumes of autobiography in 1977, he wrote, "I wish you would write a book like everyone else, the abstention looks rather ostentatious." Knowing her proclivity, however, he added that "you wouldn't have to *read* it; someone else (viz. one) would do that." The ruse seems to have worked; she has since gone on to publish at least ten books.

Leigh Fermor's writing career began more than fifteen years before his first book appeared. In 1933, at 18, he set out to cross Europe from the Hook of Holland to Constantinople. "I would travel on foot," he decided, "sleep in hayricks in summer, shelter in barns when it was raining or snowing and only consort with peasants and tramps." He reached Constantinople a little more than a year later, but the trip did not go exactly as planned. He did meet peasants and tramps, but he also befriended at least as many counts and slept in more castles than cowsheds. It also turned out that his destination wasn't the endpoint he thought it would be. From Constantinople he drifted toward Mount Athos and the Greek archipelago. When war broke out he served on Crete as a liaison officer in the SOE. "After the war," as Mosley explains in her introduction to *In Tearing Haste*, "wanderlust took Paddy to the Caribbean, Central America, France, Spain, Italy and, most often, to Greece," where he and his wife, Joan, built themselves a house in the early 1960s.

Leigh Fermor is invariably called a travel writer, often with an epithet involving the word "greatest" in some combination with "modern," "English," "postwar" or "living." The label isn't inaccurate, but it sells the work short. His books have created an undeniably literary genre that is distinctly his own—part memoir, part history, often lyrical, always precise. Reading a Leigh Fermor book, it is almost impossible to say what is most captivating: the companionable, erudite and witty narrative voice, the minutely rendered landscapes, the spelunking in historical labyrinths (typically guided by the alluring thread of etymology) or characters who invariably display more complicated human dimensions than those encountered in travel literature.

The overall effect is novelistic. In fact, his second book, *The Violins of Saint-Jacques* (1953), was a novel, and this early foray into fiction, although less widely praised than his later books, reads in retrospect like an allegorical premonition of the work that followed. In the novel—which came on the heels of his account of a journey in the Caribbean, *The Traveller's Tree* (1950)—a young Frenchwoman who has traveled to an island in the Antilles to serve as governess to the children of a distant cousin falls in love with the life she discovers there, a world centered on a "happy, patrician, slightly provincial minority" in some ways similar to the lingering pockets of Central European aristocracy Leigh Fermor encountered on his walk in the 1930s. Then she sees the entire culture destroyed.

A volcano wipes out the island, but its cataclysmic eruption gives a rapid-fire fictional life—like the accelerated action of time-lapse photography—to the gradual historical change, usually for the worse, that Leigh Fermor's books are always reaching behind as they reconstruct a lost past. Other key elements of the later books are likewise anticipated by *The Violins of Saint-Jacques*. The novel opens on a note derived from the travel genre—"Little distinguishes the history of the small island from that of the other French Windward and Leeward Isles except that less is known about it"—and Leigh Fermor wastes no time in steering the narrative onto a track that would become familiar, turning to etymology (in this case the story of the island's name) to unlock the puzzles of the historical past. The narrator, nearly indistinguishable from the author's persona in the nonfiction books, meets the Frenchwoman many years later on another island (in the Mediterranean, as you might expect) and pieces together her peculiar history of loss over the course of several prolonged evening conversations supplemented by her old sketchbooks.

When the woman finishes her tale, the narrator tries to console her by explaining that fishermen in the Caribbean have told him they regularly hear the sound of violins

"History is the soft medium…"

History is the soft medium into which you cut; love "is the" instrument that cuts. "Love is the" drill.

"Love" "cuts" to "the" depth of "the" jokes, "which" flow out. Puns "flow out" gaily from "the" wound made by "love."

Yeah that's what it's like.

"History" "cuts" everywhere with equal ease but "love" "cuts" deep "into" living flesh.

AARON KUNIN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rising from the channel where the island once lay. They don't associate the ghostly music with the island itself or know anything of the woman's story, but their legend reassures her that the world she knew, though obliterated, is not gone without a trace. The sentiment that suffuses *The Violins of Saint-Jacques* is one that recurs in Leigh Fermor's subsequent books—fascination with a world that has disappeared yet never ceased to exist at some submerged, or subconscious, level. Saint-Jacques is less Atlantis than Combray.

A comparable atmosphere of nostalgia—whether for his own past or the fading history of a culture he's exploring—pervades Leigh Fermor's later writing, turning his books into "travel literature" as it might have been written by Proust (if Proust had gotten a good deal more fresh air and plenty of vigorous rural exercise). There is an elegiac quality, in particular, to the two volumes that are the touchstones of Leigh Fermor's career. *A Time of Gifts* (1977) and *Between the Woods and the Water* (1986) describe the first two stages of the epic meander he took across Europe nearly half a century before the books were written. Near the end of *A Time of Gifts*, Leigh Fermor has traveled as far as the Danube, and he describes his impressions of standing on a bridge spanning a point in the river marking a border between Czechoslovakia and Hungary. The episode begins in the voice of an observant and literate young traveler describing the scene around him: "The masonry of the piers below sent green Ophelia-like tresses of waterweed swaying down the current. Upstream, the water broke up the reflected turquoise of a sky full of dishevelled cirrus clouds."

But as the young Leigh Fermor watches the river rush between the structure's girders on a journey that will eventually take it through the Iron Gates gorge on the lower Danube (where the second volume on his journey will wind up decades later), the narrative offers a glimpse of its double consciousness. With storks wheeling overhead in mid-migration and a crowd of people in the midst of their own lives "strolling and hobnobbing all along the waterfront," Leigh Fermor becomes overwhelmed by the fullness of the experience. "There was much going on: in the air and the sky on the river, along the banks; almost too much." It is as if the author has been overwhelmed by memory as he writes this passage. And it is his voice, the older writer's, that eventually emerges.

> I found it impossible to tear myself from my station and plunge into Hungary. I feel the same disability now: a momentary reluctance to lay hands on this particular fragment of the future; not out of fear but because, within arm's reach and still intact, this future seemed, and still seems, so full of promised marvels. The river below, meanwhile, was carrying the immediate past downstream and I was hung poised in mid-air between the two.

The "fragment of the future" is a fragment of the past by the time Leigh Fermor gets around to telling the story, and it is a signal of his powers as an imaginative, rather than simply descriptive, writer that he is able to re-create—and inhabit along with us—the moment as it existed forty years earlier, with its poignantly transitional atmosphere only heightened by the retrospective nature of the endeavor. It's as if we feel the moment on the bridge because Leigh Fermor unmasks himself as the author in the present, looking back at the solitary image of himself in the past, so that the narrative hangs in midair, bridging the two points in time and charged with the mixed emotions of each.

But if backward glances tinge his books with melancholy, the mood is counterweighted by his obvious excitement at piecing together the jigsaw pieces of history, typically while relishing a given locale's food and drink and singing the local songs. What he says in *Roumeli* (1966) of his wartime allies applies equally to him: "The Cretans see life in tragic and heroic terms. This being so, it is fortunate that their feeling of comedy is also pronounced." Capturing the mixed emotions that charge our experiences—whether we are at home or on the road as he so often is—may in fact be what Leigh Fermor does uniquely well.

The bracing effect of this complex synthesis is visible even in his prose. Ben Downing, one of the writer's most eloquent supporters in American literary circles, describes Leigh Fermor's writing as "at once exquisite and offhand, sweeping yet intimate, with a cadence all its own." The observation points to a broader fact about the scope of the books: Leigh Fermor simply does not draw boundaries between his various spheres of interest. In the books about his journey across Europe, he starts out on foot like a kind of gypsy scholar, but he winds up sleeping in castles and burrowing into the libraries of Central

Disappearing
CIVIL LIBERTIES Mug
Pour in a hot beverage and see what remains of the Bill of Rights, thanks to the Patriot Act!

$12.95 +S&H
A PORTION OF THE PROCEEDS GO TO *THE NATION!*
THE Nation. and THE UNEMPLOYED PHILOSOPHERS GUILD
www.thenationmart.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Europe's dwindling aristocracy. When circumstances leave him roughing it with swineherds and gypsies, he appears no less happy pocketing an obscure dialect phrase plucked from a campfire conversation. And the persona who takes such turns cheerfully in the books is, by all accounts, a more or less unaffected representation of the man himself. Describing Leigh Fermor's sojourn in Cairo during the war, Artemis Cooper—who edited his essay collection *Words of Mercury* (2003) and is now at work on what promises to be a landmark biography—writes, "Leigh Fermor could quote poetry in several languages, and sing 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary' in French and Arabic. The loyalty and affection he inspired in the Cretans attested to his soldierly virtues; but these were masked by the romantic ebullience, half Byron and half pantomime pirate, which enchanted his friends."

Leigh Fermor's achievements in the genre he perfected remain unequaled.

The effect this multifaceted personality has on strangers is evident throughout the *In Tearing Haste* correspondence. When in 1961 Leigh Fermor was staying in a gloomy, threadbare hotel in Bordeaux, he did what came naturally, and began reciting poetry to the maid—"a tall fair sad beauty, no makeup, in a severe black dress and starched white apron"—who helped him carry in his luggage. "Peering into the rainy square," he recalls, "I quoted two lines of Verlaine about the monotonous noise of the rain, which she promptly continued for several more lines. She turned out to be enormously well read, from Paris, lonely and gloomy in Bordeaux." The two spend the evening together at a nearby bar, and when they part company, they exchange a farewell wave behind the backs of the other maids.

There are similar incidents in Leigh Fermor's books, and the source of their vitality is less an erotic spark shared with a stranger than a literary bond. The most striking example comes in *A Time of Gifts*, where Leigh Fermor remembers the morning in 1944 when he found himself reciting Horace in a cave with a view of Mount Ida. Along with William Stanley Moss and a party of Cretan resistance fighters, Leigh Fermor had just kidnapped Maj. Gen. Heinrich Kreipe, who commanded one of the German divisions then occupying Crete. After waylaying his staff car at a hairpin turn outside Heraklion (there is a monument on the spot today), Leigh Fermor and his party spirited the general through a series of checkpoints and up into the mountains, from where they would make their way to the sea and finally on to Cairo. It was hard traveling, and the general was not favorably disposed toward his captors. But as dawn broke outside the cave that morning, Leigh Fermor overheard Kreipe reciting in Latin the opening stanza of a poem he recognized as Horace's "Ode 1.9." Leigh Fermor carried the recitation through the remaining five stanzas. "The general's blue eyes had swiveled away from the mountain-top to mine," he recalls, "and when I'd finished, after a long silence, he said: 'Ach so, Herr Major!' It was very strange. As though, for a long moment, the war had ceased to exist. We had both drunk at the same fountains long before; and things were different between us for the rest of our time together."

What's so satisfying about *In Tearing Haste* is the way Leigh Fermor's letters reanimate episodes and characters, allowing their story lines to spill beyond the confines of his books. In 1972 Leigh Fermor was reunited with General Kreipe for a television program, and after the broadcast the two men joined a group of Leigh Fermor's old Cretan allies at a nearby taverna. As he described the evening in a letter to Devonshire that May, it might have been a reunion of schoolmates rather than former enemies: "Lots of Cretan songs and dances, a few German folk songs sung by the General and me, after much wine had flowed." When local journalists heard what was going on, they crashed the party. "One asked the General how I had treated him when he was my prisoner in the mountains and the Gen said—wait for it!—most energetically: '*Ritterlich! Wie ein Ritter*' ('*Chivalrously! Like a knight*!')."

The story bears out a notion that runs like a spring beneath all of Leigh Fermor's books: there is a deep culture (albeit a disappearing one) of literature, art and civility—and a shared history evident in the thickets of etymology—that transcends both time and national borders. The upwelling of emotion Leigh Fermor describes on hearing General Kreipe has as much to do with that larger connection as with the praise itself, and the feeling only deepens when Frau Kreipe, a few days later, says, "You're just like my husband told me you were all these years."

Not all the reunions Leigh Fermor recounts in the letters were so cheerful. On a trip to Hungary in 1985, he tracked down an old friend from the period described in *Between the Woods and the Water*. Elemér von Klobusiçky, who is called István in the book, was in his early 30s when Leigh Fermor met him, a man "at the height of his vigour"—tall, cultivated and "a virtuoso at all he took up." Those qualities held the younger traveler in his gravity for as long a period as any stop on his journey. But on this later occasion Leigh Fermor found István in an old folks' home. Drawn and nearly toothless, he was still recognizably himself, but the recognition ran only one way. "When I said 'I'm on my way to Greece' he said again and again, 'In Greece lives my old friend Leigh Fermor. Greet him from me."

In a correspondence spanning half a century, the effects of aging are bound to register, and Devonshire and Leigh Fermor can be overheard joking about "Admiral von Alzheimer" and "Dr Oblivion." The writers lament the loss of a great many of their friends, including their respective spouses. But the collection also suggests that the two of them—now in their 90s—have remained remarkably unhindered by the ravages of time. In one captivating letter Leigh Fermor, then just a few weeks shy of his seventieth birthday, writes almost breathlessly to Devonshire to report accomplishing a feat that stands as a kind of capstone to a philhellene's career: swimming across the Hellespont, as Lord Byron did in 1810. "So here I was, about a mile S.W. from Leander's and Ld B's crossing places, a mile N.W. of Xerxes' and Alexander's boat-bridges, on the track of the Argo on the way back with the Golden Fleece and next to Troy; but too concerned about the current to think of all this, except in fitful snatches."

The letter hints at the companionable style with which his books navigate the currents of history and literature. Clearly proud of his achievement in the Hellespont's fabled waters, Leigh Fermor nonetheless passes his swim off with a characteristic shrug, but one that seems to conceal a self-deprecating wink at the long, slow career of a writer whose attainments in the genre he perfected will certainly never be matched: "I had beaten all records for slowness and length of immersion; a wreath no future swimmer is likely to snatch at." ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

© 2010 DJANGO FILMS ILLUSIONIST LTD/CINE B/FRANCE 3 CINEMA/SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

The Illusionist and his rabbit in *The Illusionist*

Worlds of Wonder

by STUART KLAWANS

Movie audiences never tire of peeking into royal chambers, witnessing fast-acting psychoanalyses, cheering on the average Joe or seeing Herr Hitler get his nose bloodied; so it's easy to understand the appeal of *The King's Speech*, in which George VI single-handedly defeats the Nazis thanks to a course of treatment from an unlicensed commoner. And there's more: *The King's Speech* enjoys the always popular trait of being true, more or less.

In the 1920s, when the future George VI was still the Duke of York, he sought a cure for his stammer (a severe impediment to public duties) but found no help until he put himself in the hands of an uncredentialed Australian speech therapist named Lionel Logue. Their relationship might not have had the world-historical import that *The King's Speech* works up for it at the climax, nor was Logue necessarily as shabby and obscure as the movie makes him out to have been; but when war came between England and Germany, and subjects throughout the empire had to be rallied to the cause, George VI did manage to deliver the necessary radio address, and Logue's coaching was integral to its success.

Which is to say that *The King's Speech* is a crowd-pleasing movie about the importance of pleasing crowds.

David Seidler's screenplay unabashedly states that theme out loud (just as it goes about unabashedly running the whole narrative pool table) when in the early scenes it has the rich-toned and overbearing George V (Michael Gambon) lecture his wretchedly tongue-tied second son on the role of monarchs in the new age of mass movements and radio. "We're actors," grumbles the old king. Although this observation would have been banal even in the 1920s, Gambon delivers it with a saving mixture of distaste and satisfaction—distaste because George V prides himself on bearing burdens unimaginable to an ordinary performer and satisfaction because in his superiority he has mastered the modern airwaves. Why can't his son?

"Why?" turns out to be exactly the question that Geoffrey Rush as Logue (or Lionel, as he prefers to be called) repeatedly presses on Colin Firth as the royal patient (or Bertie, as Lionel persists in calling him). The royal family may care about nothing but results, but Lionel must have reasons. Only viewers who are entirely ignorant of dramatic conventions will fail to guess what's coming when Bertie and his loving wife, Elizabeth (the ever-welcome Helena Bonham Carter), insist that the problem is purely physical, and no impertinent questions about the duke's personal life will be allowed. Only viewers who are entirely impervious to dramatic pleasure will fail to enjoy the ensuing contest—not just between Lionel and Bertie but also between Rush and Firth.

One lopes about and croons like a hyperarticulate camel; the other squares himself up and clicks at the back of his throat like a handsomely wrapped toy that's malfunctioned. You might think Rush would have the advantage, given his centripetal personality, plus the opportunity to wow the audience with tongue twisters. But despite giving him a warm and chummy character to play, and occasions for jocular virtuosity, the movie maneuvers him into second place in the audience's affections behind the chronically self-contained Firth. Everything well calculated and responsible in Firth's approach to acting, even in comedy, finds its ideal outlet in Bertie, a man so alert to every nuance of duty that he hardly blinks, and so trapped that his eyes continually flash with desperate, mute intelligence. It's yet another convention respected by *The King's Speech*, this binding of an able-bodied actor, whose physical protest against the constraints he's adopted reads as if it's the character's emotional pain. But conventional characters rarely have the genuine wit that Seidler's screenplay gives Bertie; or the credible relationship with a smart, protective and admiring wife; or the suggestion that his struggle corresponds with the actor's patient, laborious, ultimately brilliant construction of the performance.

What makes Firth's achievement, and Bertie's, especially affecting, I think, is the slight shabbiness of their surroundings. For a movie that's concerned with global power—dwelling in its first and last scenes on a BBC broadcast center, where ranks of machines are helpfully labeled with the names of countries around the world—*The King's Speech* scrapes by with surprisingly limited resources. A half-dozen interiors accommodate most of the action, with furnishings scarcely more lavish than the fake mustache worn by Michael Gambon. (It looks like a long, fat dust bunny that somebody rolled up and pasted to his lip.) Soundtrack music is ladled heavily onto every scene, in the old tradition of British cinema, with extra dollops of Mozart and Beethoven to keep the tone classy. The most distinctive aspect of director Tom Hooper's visual style is that it doesn't exist.

Or, to put it another way, Hooper's images in *The King's Speech* are much like the movie's most important setting, Lionel's office: a half-grandiose and half-unfinished basement room, low of ceiling, expansive of floor plan, in which beautifully wrought old woodwork is set into walls of raw, peeling cement. In this underground hideaway, the royal prince and the commoner from the colonies form a bond that must not be publicly acknowledged—similar, you might say, to the bond between Bertie's older brother, the short-term Edward VIII, and Mrs. Wallis Simpson, only all-male and therapeutic.

Like the movie itself, this core setting is an improbable melding of clever construction with shameless cliché, of cheap make-do with aspirations toward good taste. The wonder is that this sort of thing should enable such an involving and satisfying relationship to come about—between Lionel and Bertie, and between you and what's happening on the screen. The wonder is that *The King's Speech* does what Bertie,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lionel, Firth and Rush are willing to do, and Edward VIII and Mrs. Simpson are not. It really works.

For his next astonishing feat, that wizard of the animated screen Sylvain Chomet, master of *The Triplets of Belleville*, has pulled out of his hat an all-new Jacques Tati film. At least it's close enough to being all-new and all-Tati to deceive the eye—and who, witnessing this marvel, would not want to be fooled?

Chomet's source is *L'Illusionniste*, a script Tati wrote sometime in the early 1950s, when his recent success with *Jour de fête* had not blunted the memory of being a middle-aged music-hall performer knocking around Europe but going nowhere. In his biography of Tati, David Bellos writes that the earliest version of *L'Illusionniste* takes its title character, a mediocre stage magician, "down the ladder of international engagements to end up amusing Ruritanian peasants…in the back of beyond." There this surrogate Tati attracts a single admirer—a "wide-eyed, teen-age girl who really believes in the magic that she sees on stage"—who decides to accompany him on his travels. His career picks up again when they get to the Great City; but then the girl meets and falls for a young student, who fills her in on the facts of sleight of hand. She runs off with him, and the magician, alone once more, leaves the Great City on a train bound somewhere.

Bellos reports that soon after the release of *Les Vacances de Monsieur Hulot* in 1953, Tati said this story (with its ample potential for Chaplinesque self-pity) would likely be his next movie. It wasn't, of course—he did *Mon Oncle* instead, remaining in the character of Hulot—but as late as 1961 he was still thinking about making the film.

Now Chomet has given us something that might be even better than Tati himself in *L'Illusionniste*: a cartoon character, Tatischeff, with pants that are too short, a suit jacket that's too pinched, a nose that's been cranked up too high and a rabbit that's too quick to escape from its top hat and bite someone, plying his less-than-amazing trade through the beautifully animated scenes of *The Illusionist*. The tone is more sweetly melancholic than it might have been in Tati's film, since Chomet looks back on a world of music halls that have long gone dark. The setting is both grittier and more picturesque; the Great City has been turned into a 1959 Edinburgh drawn as a maze of twisting brick lanes, giddily slanted streets, stiltlike bridges and half-hidden staircase passages, all tucked improbably under a cliff that's as protuberant as Tatischeff's nose. Here the characters emit the characteristic Tati gibble-gabble in place of words—"Ha nigh day!" cries a passing American through his permanent ear-to-ear grin—but with physiognomies and gestures that can fully match the distortion.

Most important of all: the relationship between Tatischeff and Alice, the credulous serving-girl who follows him to Edinburgh, has become palatable by becoming animated. I'm not sure I could have watched a live Tatischeff and stupid, needy Alice share their forlorn little hotel suite in presumed chastity. But as cartoon characters, Alice and Tatischeff inhabit something that is by nature a world of wonders, where nothing unsavory need happen when her desire for an all-powerful sugar daddy meets his desire for an ideal audience. The way Chomet keeps posing these two behind windowpanes perhaps acknowledges the softening and distancing that animation makes possible. At the end, Chomet also inserts a subtle bit of character revelation—I suspect it's his invention, from the way it's worked into the film—that allows the relationship between Tatischeff and Alice to change in retrospect and bring *The Illusionist* to a quietly moving close.

The Illusionist will not open until December 25, so I'm a little early in recommending it. But there's never a bad moment for confessing you've fallen in love with a film—especially one that's appeared out of time.

How they would have enjoyed *Black Swan*, the Surrealists, back when they pretended the Paris movie theaters were public parks, to be used for picnicking and free-associative conversation! How they would have reveled in it, the camp followers of my '60s youth, delighting to see a movie claw its way up the gilded peaks of sublimity, only to display, for all eyes, the idiot underpants of bathos!

I laughed longer and louder than at any other movie this year; but before you try doing the same, be aware that you'll have to twitch and sigh through the first two-thirds, and then, when it gets good, face the wrath of people who are taking *Black Swan* seriously.

How they do it, I can't imagine. "We all know the story," cries master choreographer Vincent Cassel to his New York City ballet company as it begins rehearsals for *Swan Lake*; but just in case any members of his corps (or the movie audience) are slow, he summarizes the plot anyway, then promises that his new production will "make it visceral and real." A visceral and real *Swan Lake* makes as much sense to me as does Cassel's complaint to his dancers, a few scenes later, that "you're stiff like a dead corpse!" (It took three people to write this stuff.) But enough of Mr. Impresario. On to poor, childlike Natalie Portman as the little dancer he improbably chooses to play the lead, on the assumption that she can somehow discover her inner Black Swan.

This is the side of the movie that isn't so funny: its revival of the myth of the frigid girl, repressed and mother-dominated, who must be sexually awakened and also, unfortunately, has to go nuts. It's the same story as *Carrie*, told with a similar pretense of sympathy for the young woman the film is out to punish.

The difference is that after all the tiresome displays of pink wallpaper and stuffed toys to telegraph the heroine's infantilism, all the visits to the toilet to dramatize her abjection, all the studiously giddy camerawork and *Dancing With the Stars* choreography (which keeps Portman busy tossing about her arms and mugging, as she does her swoon fake), you get to the part of the movie where uncanny forces break loose—just as in *Carrie*!—and they're juicier than a bucket of pig's blood.

Black Swan is un film de Darren Aronofsky. ■

THE Nation.

SUBSCRIBER ALERT

Dear *Nation* Subscribers

It has come to our attention that several of our subscribers have received renewal notifications from independent magazine clearinghouses doing business under the names **Publishers Billing Exchange**, **Orbital Publishing Group**, **National Magazine Services** and **Magazine Distribution Services**. These companies have not been authorized to sell subscriptions on behalf of *The Nation* magazine, and we have no guarantee that subscriptions purchased from them will be sent to *The Nation*.

We do use some legitimate subscription services to sell our publication. If you receive a renewal notice and are unsure of its authenticity, please call our subscriber-care department and order your renewal through them.

You may contact subscriber services by calling our toll-free number,
(800) 333-8536
or via the Web at
www.thenation.com/subscription-services

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Classified

To advertise in the classified section, contact amanda@thenation.com or call (212) 209-5414. A fifteen-word advertisement running three times in the classified section costs $247.50.

ANCIENT SECRETS

SCHOLARLY BOOKLET PROVES PISO (*aka* Josephus) invented fictional Jesus, Gospels. Amazing but incontrovertible. $15: Abelard, Box 5652 A, Kent, WA 98064.

BLOGS/WEB

GET GRANDPA'S FBI FILE.COM *Unless you ask, you'll never know…*

MEDITATIONS OF A BEDOUIN F-15 JET FIGHTER PILOT. alQasas.net.

BOOKS

THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS AND MARY MAGDALENE, revealed in beautifully illustrated children's book. $12. kgoete@verizon.net.

PERVERT: NOTES FROM THE SEXUAL UNDERGROUND—Intelligent, erotic perspectives by dominatrix/sex educator Nancy Ava Miller, M. Ed. Poems! Paragraphs! Pix! nancyava.com; (505) 255-9255.

FREE NOVEL/EASY DOWNLOAD: *Ruling Class Smackdown, the Novel, or, Hellfire Revenge* (316 pp). Hard-hitting fantasy on cutting the rulers of the world down to size with social class–driven activism. A scathing critique of US and Israeli power. Go to scribd.com—books fiction ("Ruling Class Smackdown").

HOUSING WANTED

POTENTIAL *NATION*, *HARPER'S*, *DEMOCRACY NOW!* intern seeking room & board in exchange for P/T services. alexanderkelly.wordpress.com.

LIBERAL LIAISONS

If responding to a Nation Box number, send replies to: Nation Box ___, The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

FETISHES AND FANTASIES fulfilled. Hot erotic talk with creative, sensuous woman. No limits. Personal. Confidential. Call (866) 844-8286.

AURAL EROTICA. Well-heeled, well-spoken, not always well-behaved. Fetish friendly, smart & sexy. (800) 717-LIZZ (5499); ElizabethPaxton.com.

WEST COAST MAN SEEKS WEST COAST WOMAN, well-read, well-spoken, not tall, for last, warm union in time. (250) 285-2169.

WIDOW IN WESTCHESTER, NY, seeks friendship with a man 77–87 who lives nearby and loves Mozart. fapoetry@verizon.net.

WEST COAST MALE, 70s. Well-read, fit, thoughtful. Seeks West Coast female, petite, warm, savvy, for last long waltz before the dance is over. (250) 285-2169.

MERCHANDISE

CAT LOVERS AGAINST THE BOMB 2011 wall calendar $8.95 + $1.75 postage. Cats and peace—what more could you want in a calendar? Order from: CLAB-NC, PO Box 83466, Lincoln, NE 68501; or toll-free (877) 778-3434; or catcal@aol.com.

EXCITING NEW DESSERT: HALF-BAKED ALASKA cafepress.com/sarahsapron.

CAN YOU GET HEALTHCARE COVERAGE FOR A PALINOSCOPY? cafepress.com/palinoscopy.

DOES YOUR SUPERMARKET CARRY GOLDMAN SNACKS CHEATOS? cafepress.com/goldmansnacks.

MERCHANDISE

Talk Back Tees

Liberal quotations, wit & wisdom, hand-printed on colorful, 100% cotton tees

talkbacktees.com (800) 777-9242

PSYCHOTHERAPY

CHICAGO PSYCHOTHERAPIST, twenty-five years, all issues, including depression, anxiety, relationships, creative blocks. Sliding scale, insurance. Deborah Hellerstein, PhD. (312) 409-9516; therapyinchicago.com.

REAL ESTATE

LEFT COAST, US. Work with The Realtor Who's on Your Side. Norma J.F. Harrison. (510) 526-3968. (866) 264-9029. NormaHa@pacbell.net.

SANTA FE: PROGRESSIVE REALTOR® seeks same in clients. Peter Kahn, Santa Fe Realty Partners. (505) 690-4840 cell, (877) 982-6207 toll free, or peter@peterkahn.com.

DOME HOME: Duluth, Minnesota. 3.8 acres. New septic and well, garden, wood-burning stove and conventional heat source. $129,900. (218) 728-2991.

UNUSUAL SERVICES

PRE-NEED OBITUARIES. Are you dying to write your own obituary? Get help from a professional "ghostwriter." Or would you rather your kids have the last word? obitwriter.net.

GOVERNMENT ATTIC.ORG *Cool Declassified Documents.*

Events

NATIONAL

Economy Connection

■ War and global capitalism. Unemployment and recession. Wealth, poverty and inequality. For speakers and resources on these and related topics, contact Economy Connection, a project of the Union for Radical Political Economics. We can provide speakers for formal or informal events sponsored by community groups, unions, high schools, colleges or political organizations. soapbox@urpe.org or (201) 792-7459. Join URPE! • urpe.org. (413) 577-0806. URPE@labornet.org.

NEW YORK

Concerned About the World?

■ Learn transmission meditation. Simple. Powerful. Effective. Transmission meditation is a group service activity that aids in the distribution of potent spiritual energies. Simple to learn, nonsectarian, never a fee. Only heartfelt aspiration and the desire to serve are needed. Free introductory talk. Thursday, December 9, 6:30 PM. New York Theosophical Society, 240 East 53rd Street, between Second and Third Avenues. (212) 665-9959.

The advertising deadline for Events is every Thursday. Rates: $210 for 50 words; $260 for 75 words, additional words (above 75) $2.00 each. To place an ad, call Amanda at (212) 209-5414.

CINEASTE

Now in its 44th year of publication, *Cineaste* is internationally recognized as America's leading quarterly on the art and politics of the cinema. Each issue features thought-provoking coverage, with exclusive interviews, topical articles, special supplements, critical symposia, and in-depth film, book, and DVD reviews.

"A trenchant, eternally zestful magazine… in the forefront of American film periodicals… and it permits its writers more space to develop ideas than most magazines."
—International Film Guide

"Cineaste *ranks highly as a magazine with serious journalistic writing and true integrity… it stands up for important causes and special films that would otherwise be lost in our mass consumption of pop culture."*
—Oliver Stone

To order a sample issue, or to subscribe, visit our Website at **www.cineaste.com**

The little button with a **BIG** message

peacebuttons.info

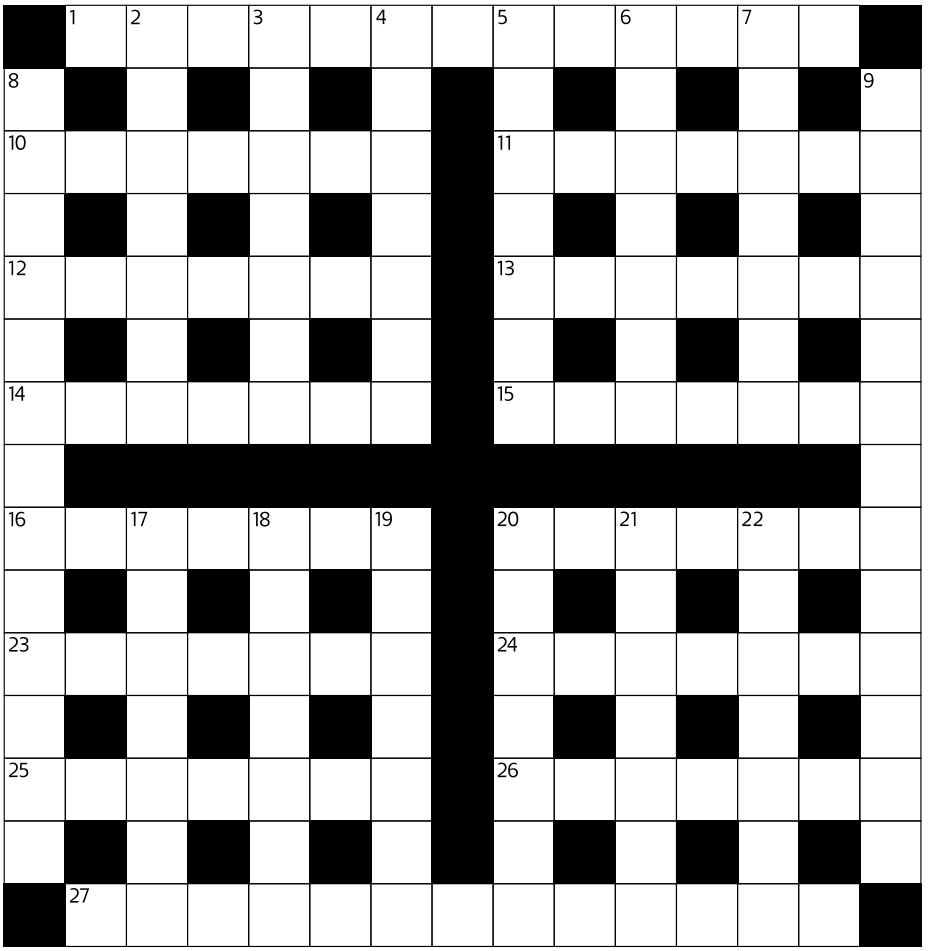
Items featuring the 1958 peace symbol

Twelve Months of Cats • Quotes • Dates
2011
Wall Calendar
Cat Lovers Against the Bomb
The Dream of
Peace
$8.95 + $1.75 Postage
Order from: Cat Lovers Against the Bomb Tel: 877-778-3434
P.O. Box 83466, Lincoln, NE 68501 e-mail: catcal@aol.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Puzzle No. 1612

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Hang on to a couple of bits to do this, and show no mercy. (4,2,7)

10 Put back the remainder with something from mine. (7)

11 In France he scatters coins about, to find some element of it. (7)

12 Hung around to find everything faded away around it. (7)

13 See 4 down

14 It makes a thing what it is. (7)

15 Point away behind, or in one direction? (7)

16 One's 13 might be, or just listened to unofficially. (7)

20 A mechanical instrument, with crude oil, a pan being required for extraction. (7)

23 Making out in it might be expensive at some colleges. (7)

24 One arrangement of the tune let light in by it, perhaps like the moon. (7)

25 Last? Well, last with not quite everything! (7)

26 Perhaps a home away from home, with something you might give milk and water there. (7)

27 Does it demand dual personality to be so upset? (6,7)

DOWN

2 Causes umbrage. (7)

3 If plied onto me, I get feeling badly. (7)

4 and **13** across What happens when the reporter misses a deadline might call for a reminder. (7,7)

5 Some New Yorkers might consider capital where a vertical two-way switch might be. (7)

6 Their husbands have gone, it's clear, without a present to exchange. (7)

7 Shut out. (7)

8 Lucius to Horatius, or perhaps East if one is West. (6,7)

9 You'll see it's no tune, as an arrangement is made in a flash. (13)

17 Fade away, like a breeze led astray around it. (7)

18 Place where a minor accident ends with an oil spill, perhaps. (7)

19 What's left after necessary deductions in a poor diet? One might eat there. (7)

20 One certainly has a large bill for food. (7)

21 Books of flowers? (7)

22 Nothing at breakfast, for example, might satisfy a Scotsman like this. (7)

Frank W. Lewis
1912–2010

Please see our remembrance on page 4.

This puzzle originally appeared in the December 20, 1975, issue.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1611

C	L	O	A	K	A	N	D	■	D	A	G	G	E	R
O	■	N	■	N	■	E	■	F	■	S	■	A	■	E
C	A	T	H	O	D	E	■	R	E	C	O	R	D	S
K	■	H	■	C	■	D	■	U	■	O	■	D	■	O
T	W	E	A	K	■	L	I	G	H	T	Y	E	A	R
A	■	■	■	D	■	E	■	A	■	■	■	N	■	T
I	G	L	O	O	■	S	A	L	A	D	O	I	L	■
L	■	I	■	W	■	■	■	■	■	O	■	N	■	I
■	A	B	A	N	D	O	N	S	■	W	A	G	O	N
S	■	R	■	■	■	U	■	E	■	N	■	■	■	S
H	E	A	D	W	A	T	E	R	■	R	A	D	I	I
A	■	R	■	A	■	L	■	B	■	I	■	R	■	D
K	R	I	S	H	N	A	■	I	N	G	R	A	T	E
E	■	A	■	O	■	Y	■	A	■	H	■	K	■	R
R	A	N	D	O	M	■	K	N	I	T	T	E	R	S

The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published weekly (except for the second week in January, and biweekly the third week of July through the second week of September) by The Nation Company, L.P. © 2010 in the U.S.A. by The Nation Company, L.P., 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. (212) 209-5400. Washington Bureau: Suite 308, 110 Maryland Avenue N.E., Washington, DC 20002. (202) 546-2239. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. Subscription orders, changes of address and all subscription inquiries: The Nation, PO Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235, or call 1-800-333-8536. Publications Mail Agreement No: 40041477. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Bleuchip International, PO Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2. Canada Post: Publications Mail Agreement No.: 40612608. When ordering a subscription, please allow 4-6 weeks for receipt of your first issue and for all subscription transactions. Basic annual subscription price: $79 for 47 issues. Back issues $6 prepaid ($8 foreign) from: The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. The Nation is available on microfilm from: University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Nation, PO Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235. Printed in U.S.A. on recycled paper.

LICENSED TO GALE/OTHO
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

You deserve a factual look at . . .

Israel and the United States

Is Israel an asset or a burden to our country?

The United States is without question Israel's most important ally. Also, without question, Israel is the staunchest and most reliable friend of the United States. But there are some who believe and vigorously advocate that Israel is a burden to the United States and that, were it not for Israel, peace would prevail in the Middle East.

What are the facts?

The "Israel lobby." There are indeed those who claim that Israel is a liability, a burden to our country. Professors from prestigious universities write essays in which they aver that the United States is in thrall to the "Israel lobby." This lobby is said to pull the strings of American policy. Its supposed main promoters are AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) and the so-called "neo-cons," some of whom are indeed Jewish. They are said to exert an almost magical spell over policy makers, including the leaders of Congress and the President. Some even say that the Iraq war was promoted by this omnipotent "Israel lobby," that the President was flummoxed into declaring war on Saddam Hussein, not in order to defend the United States or to promote its interests, but in order to further the interests of Israel.

Israel is indeed a major recipient of U.S. aid. Israel receives yearly $3.0 billion, all of it in military aid – nothing in economic aid. 75% of this military aid must be spent with U.S. military contractors, making Israel a very large customer of those companies.

America's staunchest ally. A good case can be made that aid to Israel, all of it military, should be part of the United States defense budget, rather than of the aid budget because Israel is, next only perhaps to Britain, by far the most important ally of the United States. Virtually without exception, Israel's government and its people agree with and support the foreign policy objectives of the United States. In the United Nations, Israel's votes coincide with those of the United States over 90% of the time. The Arabs and other Moslem countries, virtually all of them recipients of American largess, almost reflexively vote against the United States in most instances.

> "Israel and the United States stand together in their fight against Islamo-fascist terrorism. These shared values will bind Israel and the United States forever."

Israel is the major strategic asset of the United States in an area of the world that is the cradle of Islamo-fascism, which is dominated by tyrants and permeated by religious obscurantism and shows almost total disregard for human rights. During the decades-long Cold War, Israel was America's indispensable rampart against the inroads of the Soviet Union. It is now the bulwark against the aggressive intentions of Iran. During Desert Storm, Israel provided invaluable intelligence, an umbrella of air cover for military cargo, and had personnel planted in the Iraqi deserts to pick up downed American pilots.

Gen. George Keagan, former head of U.S. Air Force Intelligence, stated publicly that "Israel is worth five CIAs," with regard to intelligence passed to our country. He also stated that the yearly $3.0 billion that Israel received in military assistance was worth $50 to $60 billion in intelligence, R&D savings, and Soviet weapons systems captured and transferred to the Pentagon. In contrast to our commitments in Korea, Japan, Germany, and other parts, not a single American serviceperson needs to be stationed in Israel. Considering that the cost of one serviceperson per year – including backup and infrastructure – is estimated to be about $200,000, and assuming a minimum contingent of 25,000 troops, the cost savings to the United States on that score alone is on the order of $5 billion a year.

Israel effectively secures NATO's southeastern flank. Its superb harbor, its outstanding military installations, the air and sea lift capabilities, and the trained manpower to maintain sophisticated equipment are readily at hand in Israel. It is the only country that makes itself available to the United States in any contingency. Yes, Israel is not a burden, but a tremendous asset to the United States.

Israel is indeed America's unsinkable aircraft carrier in the Middle East and the indispensable defender of America's interests in that area of the world. The people of the United States, individually and through their Congressional representatives, overwhelmingly support Israel in its seemingly unending fight against Arab aggression and Muslim terror. But that support is not only based on the great strategic value that Israel represents to the United States. It is and always has been based on shared values of liberty, democracy, and human rights. America and Israel are aligned by their shared love of peace and democracy. Israel and the United States stand together in their fight against Islamo-fascist terrorism. These shared values, these common ideals, will bind Israel and the United States forever.

This message has been published and paid for by

FLAME

Facts and Logic About the Middle East
P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159
Gerardo Joffe, President

FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit educational 501 (c)(3) organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national newspapers and magazines. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and for related direct mail.

99A

To receive free FLAME updates, visit our website: www.factsandlogic.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A floor lamp that spreads sunshine all over a room.

The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp brings many of the benefits of natural daylight indoors for glare-free lighting that's perfect for reading.

You don't need the sun to get the natural benefits of daylight

- *See with clarity and enjoyment*
- *Creates natural, glare-free light*
- *Provides sharp visibility*
- *Flexible gooseneck design*
- *Instant-on, flicker-free light*
- *Pays for itself in energy savings over the life of the bulb*

Ever since the first humans built a fire in their dark cave, people have realized the importance of proper indoor lighting. But ever since Edison invented the light bulb, lighting technology has, unfortunately, remained relatively prehistoric.

Modern light fixtures do little to overcome problems associated with improper lighting. As more and more of us spend longer and longer hours in front of our computer monitor, these problems are compounded. And the effects of improper indoor lighting are not necessarily limited to a physical problem: the quantity and quality of light can also play a part in both our mood and work performance.

Studies show that sunshine can both lift your mood and enhance your energy levels. But as we all know, the sun does not always shine. Now, however, there's a solution to the problem–a way to bring the positive benefits associated with natural daylight indoors. The **Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp** will change not only the way you see, but also the way you feel about your living and work spaces. It brings the benefits of natural daylight indoors, simulating the full spectrum of daylight.

The **Balanced Spectrum's** 27-watt compact bulb is brighter than a 100-watt ordinary light bulb. With the lamp's sharp visibility, you will see with more clarity and enjoyment in close tasks such as reading, writing, sewing, and needlepoint.

Experience sunshine indoors at the touch of a switch. This amazing lamp is not only easy on the eyes, it is easy on the hands as well, featuring a special "soft-touch, flicker-free" rocker switch that is easier to use than traditional toggle or twist switches. And its flexible gooseneck design enables you to get light exactly where you need it. The high-tech electronics, the user-friendly design, and a bulb that lasts 10 times longer than an ordinary bulb–all these features make the **Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp** a must-have.

Technology revolutionizes the light bulb

- *8,000 hours bulb life*
- *Energy efficient*
- *Shows true colors*

Try the Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp for the best value ever! Now more than ever is the time to spread sunshine all over the room in your home at this fantastic low price! The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp comes with *first*STREET's exclusive guarantee. Try this lamp for 90 days and return it for the product purchase price if not completely satisfied.

This light can change the way you live and work

"It provides excellent lighting which is very close to true daylight. The lamp itself is light enough to be moved easily around a room and an office. The glare-free characteristics provide a very non-stressful illumination for prolonged reading.
–Stanley G., M.D.

As soon as I turned on the lamp and began to read the newspaper I could see the wonderful difference. This lamp is just what I needed. Thank you so much.
–Donna E.

I am a Happy Camper. Once again I can decipher these pesky little numbers on a crossword puzzle. No more filling in 35 Across when it should have be 38 Across. Can you imagine the frustration avoided? Moreover, I can enjoy again a paperback with small print. My reading options have increased."
–Jack W.

Dozens of testimonials on file.
Results may vary.

Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp ..... was ~~$59.95~~

Call now for $10 instant savings!

Only $49.95 each + S&H

*Order two Balanced Spectrum® floor lamps and get **FREE shipping** on both lamps.

*Free shipping within the contiguous 48 states only.

Please mention promotional code 41566.

For fastest service, call toll-free 24 hours a day.

1-888-894-3659

We accept all major credit cards, or if you choose, you can pay by check over the phone. To order by mail, please call for details.

www.balancedspectrum.com

firstSTREET for Boomers and Beyond®

1998 Ruffin Mill Road
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

Copyright © 2009 by *first*STREET for Boomers and Beyond, Inc. All rights reserved.

41479

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED